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Human resources management

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Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the following reports of the Secretary-General:

(a) Overview of human resources management reform: towards a global, dynamic and adaptable workforce (A/67/324);

(b) Overview of human resources management reform: towards a global, dynamic and adaptable workforce: mobility (A/67/324/Add.1);

(c) Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics (A/67/329);

(d) Composition of the Secretariat: gratis personnel, retired staff and consultants and individual contractors (A/67/329/Add.1);

(e) Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and possible criminal behaviour, 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012 (A/67/171 and Corr.1);

(f) Amendments to the Staff Rules (A/67/99 and Corr.1);

(g) Activities of the Ethics Office (A/67/306).

2. The Advisory Committee also had before it for information the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Management of sick leave in the United Nations system" (A/67/337), "Staff-management relations within the United Nations" (A/67/136) and "Review of the medical service in the United Nations system" (A/66/327), as well as the comments of the Secretary-General and of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination on those reports, contained in documents A/67/337/Add.1, A/67/136/Add.1 and A/66/327/Add.1, respectively. During its consideration of the reports, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification. The Committee also met, at their request, with representatives of the

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United Nations Staff Union and, via videoconference, with representatives of the Field Staff Union, the staff unions at the regional commissions, the Geneva Staff Union and the Nairobi Staff Union.

3. Sections II and III of the present report deal with the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Overview of human resources management reform: towards a global, dynamic and adaptable workforce" (A/67/324) and the addendum thereto on mobility (A/67/324/Add.1). Sections IV to VII deal with the other reports of the Secretary-General related to human resources management listed in paragraphs 1 (c) to (g) above.

II. Overview of human resources management reform

4. The report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/67/324 builds on the previous overview report of the Secretary-General (A/65/305 and Add.1-4) and outlines the human resources management reforms implemented or under implementation since the decisions taken by the General Assembly at its sixty-third and sixty-fifth sessions (resolutions 63/250 and 65/247). It also sets out what the Secretary-General views as the next steps in the reform process (see table 1 of the report for a summary of the progress made as at August 2012 and table 2 for an indication of the next steps).

5. It is indicated in paragraph 6 of the report of the Secretary-General that the overarching goal of the continuum of human resources reforms is to create an Organization that is better able to implement the mandates entrusted to it by Member States, delivered by a truly global, dynamic and adaptable workforce. **While the Advisory Committee recognizes the continuing efforts of the Secretary-General to address the issues raised by the General Assembly in its resolutions 63/250 and 65/247, it takes the view that much remains to be done. Moreover, the Committee considers that the overview report would have benefited from an analysis of whether the reform measures implemented to date, in particular the streamlined contractual arrangements, are yielding the expected benefits. The General Assembly should be provided with further information on this issue at the time of its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General.**

Contractual arrangements

6. In paragraphs 16 to 19 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that, since the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 65/247, in which the Assembly decided on the modalities for the granting of continuing appointments under the new contractual regime, the Office of Human Resources Management has developed the legal framework governing the yearly review for the award of continuing appointments under the post envelope quota (see Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2011/9 and administrative instruction ST/AI/2012/3), as well as an electronic tool, in Inspira, to support the administration of those appointments. In paragraph 20, the Secretary-General states that the first review exercise is due to be launched in late 2012, once the one-time review of staff eligible for conversion to permanent appointments has been concluded.

7. With regard to the one-time review for conversion to permanent appointments, it is indicated in table 1 of the report that, as at 23 July 2012, 99 per cent of eligible

staff members (4,111 individuals) had been granted such appointments. In his report on the composition of the Secretariat, the Secretary-General states that, as a result of the review exercise, the ratio of staff holding permanent/continuing appointments to total staff has increased from 11 to 17 per cent (A/67/329, table 2). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, while the increase in the number of permanent appointments did not have financial implications in terms of benefits and entitlements, the amounts of termination indemnity and compensation in lieu of notice payable to staff members holding permanent or continuing appointments were higher than those payable to staff members holding fixed-term appointments. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to monitor expenditure levels for termination indemnity and compensation in lieu of notice and to report on any departure from past patterns as part of his analysis of the benefits realized to date by his reform package (see para. 5 above).**

Workforce planning

8. The Advisory Committee has, on various occasions, pointed to the need for systematic workforce planning (see A/63/526, para. 9, and A/65/537, para. 9) and, in its resolution 66/246, the General Assembly requested that a strategy on succession planning be developed for all departments of the Secretariat. Table 3 of the overview report summarizes the succession planning strategies being undertaken in response to that request. It is indicated in paragraph 22 of the report that those strategies focus on areas where staff succession is allowed through roster-based recruitment.

9. It is indicated in table 3 of the report that retirement forecasting is the main strategic tool used for succession planning for most non-field positions. In that connection, paragraph 23 of the report indicates that, during the reporting period, a five-year forecast of retirements was prepared, which revealed that an average of 681 staff members (or 1.8 per cent of the total staff population) will retire each year.

10. In a related matter, the Secretary-General indicates in paragraphs 24 and 25 of his report that, although recruitment exercises to replace retiring staff are generally initiated at least six months ahead of the forecasted retirement, vacated positions are rarely filled by the time the retiree leaves because, even in cases where the replacement has been selected, he or she has not yet been onboarded. Accordingly, it has been decided to initiate the recruitment process to replace retiring staff 12 months, rather than 6 months, before their retirement date. **The Advisory Committee welcomes this development, which it trusts will eliminate delays in the filling of posts vacated by retiring staff.**

11. The role of Inspira and the enterprise resource planning project (Umoja) in workforce planning is briefly referred to in paragraphs 29 and 30 of the overview report. It is indicated that job codes, which link job openings with candidate applications and rosters, are the building blocks of the Inspira system and will also be used widely in the enterprise resource planning system. According to the Secretary-General, a particular obstacle to the efficient analysis of workforce information has been the proliferation of those codes, and thus, during the reporting period, a data clean-up project was undertaken, as a result of which approximately 7,000 job codes were reduced, through streamlining and standardization, to

approximately 2,000. The Advisory Committee has commented further on Inspira in paragraphs 37 to 39 below.

12. **The Advisory Committee emphasizes that proper workforce planning should take into account the need to fill, through a competitive process involving both internal and external applicants, current and future vacancies with candidates meeting the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. While noting the steps taken to improve workforce planning during the reporting period, and recognizing that the staffing requirements of the Organization are contingent upon mandates which can be difficult to predict, the Committee believes that more could be done to address its earlier observation that there is scope for forecasting requirements for major occupational groups, such as language, administrative, finance, security and political and economic affairs staff, including the number of staff needed and the skills sets required (see A/65/537, para. 9). In the Committee's view, such forecasting should be facilitated by the full implementation of Inspira and the enterprise resource planning system and the associated clean-up of human resources-related data.**

13. **Furthermore, the Advisory Committee considers that the successful implementation of any mobility policy will be largely contingent on improved forecasting of future staffing requirements, as decisions about where staff will be best placed to serve the Organization can only be made if needs are clearly defined. The Committee therefore expects that the Secretary-General will include detailed information on the measures taken to improve workforce planning in his next report on human resources management.**

Staff selection and recruitment

14. In its resolution 65/247, the General Assembly requested that the Secretary-General conduct a comprehensive review of the entire recruitment process to improve the overall response time with a view to realizing the benchmark of 120 days for filling a post. In order to respond to that request, the Office of Human Resources Management has developed a monitoring framework that allocates responsibility for each step within the recruitment process to the appropriate stakeholder and sets targets for each step (A/67/324, para. 32). Table 4 of the report presents the data obtained through the use of the framework.

15. The Secretary-General indicates that, following the review of the recruitment process, it was noted that selections — excluding roster selections, which are completed almost twice as quickly as standard selections — are currently taking an average of 171 days, not including advertising time, which ranges between 15 and 60 days. The average time taken in 2011 was 170 days. The Secretary-General states that the main hold-up in the selection process is at step 2, recommendation of candidates, where hiring managers are taking an average of 112 days, compared with the target of 40 days (ibid., table 4 and para. 35). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that there were, on average, 142 applications for each job opening in the Secretariat.

16. The Secretary-General indicates that the Office of Human Resources Management has taken measures to improve recruitment timelines, which are described in paragraph 34 of the report. In particular, in order to reduce the time taken for step 2 of the selection process, hiring managers and executive offices have

received systematic training and guidance to ensure that they plan and allocate sufficient time for conducting assessment activities, and the long list/short list approach has been introduced to reduce hiring managers' workload by allowing them to distinguish applicants who meet only the basic evaluation criteria from those who also meet the desired qualifications.

17. **The Advisory Committee notes the efforts made by the Secretary-General to identify the individual/entity responsible for each step of the recruitment process, calculate the time taken for each step and determine where the bottlenecks lie, as well as the limited remedial measures introduced to date. The Committee is concerned that the 120-day target for filling a post has still not been reached, and regrets that the efficiencies anticipated as a result of the introduction of Inspira and refinements to the central review bodies process (see A/65/537, para. 12) have not led to a decrease in the time taken to fill vacancies. Noting that hiring managers are taking an average of 112 days to recommend candidates as compared to the target of 40 days, the Committee takes the view that a meaningful reduction in the time taken to recruit will be achieved only if the causes of those delays are addressed and those responsible held accountable. The Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to investigate the reasons for delays at each stage of the recruitment process. He should report on the outcome of that work, and propose appropriate measures to address the issues identified, in his next report on human resources management.**

Performance management

18. The measures taken and envisaged to strengthen the performance appraisal system at the United Nations are described in paragraphs 38 to 55 of the report. It is indicated, inter alia, that mandatory performance management training for all managers and supervisors was introduced in September 2011 and that the orientation programme for new recruits and young professionals includes sessions on performance management. In addition, the e-performance module of Inspira was globally deployed in April 2012. According to the Secretary-General, e-performance will be beneficial to the Organization because, once connected to the enterprise learning management and staffing modules of Inspira, it will allow areas identified for development to be easily linked to learning opportunities. The Secretary-General reports in this regard that, owing to a relatively low uptake, the multi-rater feedback mechanism of the e-performance pilot has not been globally deployed pending an examination of lessons learned.

19. On the topic of rewarding excellent performance, the Secretary-General indicates that a Staff-Management Committee working group on performance management has drawn up a rewards and recognition framework based on the performance management framework of the International Civil Service Commission and on best practices of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with a copy of the framework and was informed that it was designed to build a culture of appreciation in the Organization, encourage high performance and retain talent and promote organizational values. The framework emphasized the informal recognition of achievements through acknowledgement, approval, development opportunities, celebratory events and senior staff interest, and proposed the introduction of local awards schemes.

20. With regard to underperformance, the Secretary-General indicates in paragraphs 44 and 45 of his overview report that provisions for identifying and addressing performance shortcomings are set out in administrative instruction ST/AI/2010/5 and Corr.1. Pursuant to that instruction, if shortcomings are not rectified as the result of measures such as counselling, transfer, additional training and/or the institution of a time-bound performance improvement plan, administrative actions such as the non-extension/termination of an appointment or the withholding of a salary increment may be imposed. It is further indicated that, at present, the performance management training programme mentioned in paragraph 18 above is the primary mechanism for ensuring that managers are properly equipped to sanction underperformance.

21. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that very few salary increments were withheld for reasons of underperformance. The Committee was also provided with the following table showing the number of staff members receiving ratings of "partially meets expectations" or "does not meet expectations" who were sanctioned over the past five performance cycles:

Table 1
Cases of underperformance and sanctions imposed during the last five performance cycles

	Performance cycle				
Cases of underperformance and sanctions	*2007-2008*	*2008-2009*	*2009-2010*	*2010-2011*	*2011-2012*
Number of "partially meets expectations" ratings	183	169	281	337	166
Number of "does not meet expectations" ratings	12	18	28	28	12
Number of staff members separated	3	1	0	2	1
Number of staff members transferred	0	0	1	0	0
Number of staff members resigning	0	0	1	0	0
Number of rebuttals[a]	N/A	N/A	N/A	36	17
Underperformance by location					
Headquarters locations (New York, offices away from Headquarters and regional commissions)	85	86	129	127	92
Field missions	110	101	180	238	86

[a] Rebuttals are collected and recorded manually; this data represents 50 per cent of offices/departments/missions as at 21 September 2012.

22. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that there were various reasons why so few sanctions were imposed for underperformance, including the need to conform to the due process requirements set out in the performance management policy and the time taken to do so; the existence of a broad range of measures that must be imposed, including the implementation of a performance improvement plan, before resorting to sanctions; and the fact that the withholding of salary increments was an optional measure. The Committee was informed that the figures above illustrated that the issue of underperformance needed to be seriously reconsidered in the Organization. To that end, the Staff-Management Committee working group on performance management was examining ways in which the

performance management policy could be revised to clarify the steps involved in handling underperformance.

23. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in its resolution 65/247, the General Assembly emphasized that a credible, fair and fully functioning performance appraisal system is critical to effective human resources management. **The Committee notes the Secretary-General's ongoing efforts to respond to the request of the General Assembly that he continue to develop and implement measures to strengthen the performance appraisal system, and welcomes, in particular, the development of the rewards and recognition framework referred to in paragraph 19 above. The Committee urges the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in this regard.**

24. **At the same time, however, the Advisory Committee is concerned about the shortcomings identified in the current system of sanctions for underperformance, which may have an adverse effect on productivity and undermine the Secretariat's ability to implement the mandates entrusted to it by the General Assembly. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to take, as a matter of priority, all necessary steps to address those shortcomings, in particular by expediting the work of the Staff-Management Committee working group on performance management, and to report on results achieved in his next report on human resources management.**

25. In a related matter, the Advisory Committee recalls that, in his report on the activities of the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services, the Secretary-General indicates that the Office of the Ombudsman has identified performance management as its single most important cross-cutting issue. It is stated, inter alia, that many conflicts around selection, career progression and non-retention are expressions of prior gaps in performance management. During its consideration of that report, the Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the performance appraisal system had a real impact on and consequences for the contractual situation of individuals. The report highlights the fact that performance appraisals affect the staffing of the Organization, particularly in the context of downsizing and retrenchment exercises (A/67/172, paras. 107-131). In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/247, the granting of continuing contracts to staff members is contingent on, inter alia, their having received a performance rating of at least "meets expectations" or equivalent in the four most recent performance appraisal reports.

Learning and career development

26. In his overview report, the Secretary-General emphasizes the strategic importance of learning and career development in building a global, dynamic and adaptable workforce and states that, over the last 10 years, the Organization's learning programme has expanded significantly to offer staff a wide range of opportunities for developing management and leadership capacity, improving communication and conflict-resolution skills, better managing human and financial resources and upgrading substantive skills (A/67/324, paras. 56 and 57).

27. For the biennium 2012-2013, it is indicated that a total of $23.2 million from the regular budget appropriation of the Office of Human Resources Management is

dedicated to learning programmes. According to the Secretary-General, that amount is less than the 2 per cent of staff costs regarded as a minimum in best practice. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the best practice goal of 2 per cent was in line with several learning and training research studies of best practice across the public and private sectors. Upon request, the Committee was provided with the following table illustrating the total resources dedicated to training for the biennium 2012-2013 from all sources of funding, that is, the regular budget, the support account for peacekeeping operations, individual peacekeeping budgets and extrabudgetary resources:

Table 2
Total training resources approved for the biennium 2012-2013
(Thousands of United States dollars)

	Staff costs, including general temporary assistance	*Funds for training*	*Training resources as a percentage of staff costs*
Regular budget	2 740 273.9[a]	33 651.5	1.23
Support account for peacekeeping operations	427 005.2[b]	8 897.6	2.08
Peacekeeping missions (including UNLB and UNSOA)	2 850 677.6[b]	40 225.3	1.41
Subtotal	**6 017 956.7**	**82 774.4**	**1.38**
Extrabudgetary resources	3 408 570.1	6 273.3	0.18
Total	**9 426 526.8**	**89 047.7**	**0.94**

Abbreviations: UNLB, United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy; UNSOA, United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia.

[a] Net salaries (excluding staff assessment).

[b] Reflects requirements for the 2012/13 financial period pro-rated for two years.

Given the magnitude of resources dedicated to training, the Advisory Committee expects that expenditures will continue to be carefully monitored (see also A/66/779, paras. 25 and 26, for the Committee's comments on training in peacekeeping).

28. Progress made in the area of learning and career development during the reporting period is outlined in paragraphs 59 to 63 of the report. It is stated, in particular, that the review of the organizational competency framework has been completed. According to the Secretary-General, the review was undertaken with a view to ensuring that the competencies reflect current and future organizational requirements, taking into account the behaviours identified as essential to a successful global, dynamic and adaptable workforce. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with additional information on the review process, which had been designed in such a way as to obtain Organization-wide input from staff, managers and senior leaders, as well as to gain insight from frameworks in use in agencies, funds and programmes. The Committee was also provided with a copy of the draft revised competency framework, which, after consultations across the Secretariat, is due to be promulgated in early 2013.

29. With specific reference to management and leadership development training, the Secretary-General indicates in his report that enhanced management and leadership development programmes were introduced in 2009 and that by the end of 2012 some 1,900 staff at the P-4 and P-5 levels and approximately 440 staff at the D-1 and D-2 levels will have completed them. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the cost per participant of those programmes was $3,913. Average accommodation costs for the five-day programme totalled $1,145 per participant. While travel costs for the P-4 and P-5 programme were limited because it was offered at all the main duty stations, travel costs for the D-1 and D-2 programme, which was offered only in New York and Geneva, amounted to approximately $10,000 per participant. To date in 2012, $360,000 had been spent on travel for D-1 and D-2 staff in connection with the leadership development programme.

30. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in its resolution 66/246, the General Assembly stressed that the largest possible share of resources provided for training purposes should be directed towards the preparation and delivery of training and that ancillary costs, including associated travel, should be minimized. **While recognizing the value of training in terms of enhancing leadership and managerial skills and competencies, the Committee recommends that staff be permitted to travel outside their duty station for management and leadership training only when it is demonstrably more cost effective for them to do so.**

31. The Advisory Committee points out, in this connection, that its recommendations on standards of air travel for learning and development activities are set out in its report on proposals for a more effective and efficient utilization of resources for air travel (A/66/739), which is currently before the General Assembly.

32. The Advisory Committee also enquired as to the steps taken by the Secretary-General to measure the impact of training programmes on staff performance. It was informed that all structured learning programmes and activities were evaluated on the basis of immediate feedback from participants in terms of the relevance to their work and the intent to apply the new knowledge and skills acquired. In addition, a number of programmes, including the above-mentioned management and leadership development programmes, were the subject of more detailed and systematic impact assessments using the return on investment methodology endorsed and recommended by the United Nations System Staff College. The Committee was informed that, overall, the results of those assessments had been very encouraging and pointed to a positive return on the Organization's investment in learning.

33. The Secretary-General outlines the actions to be taken during the next reporting period and beyond in paragraphs 64 to 66 of his report. He indicates, inter alia, that a review is currently being undertaken of the Organization's learning and development programmes with a view to increasing the direct link between learning and career development and establishing a global strategy that will provide learning and development support to a more mobile workforce. He notes that that exercise will result in significant revisions to the learning strategy endorsed by the United Nations Learning Advisory Board in 2011. **The Advisory Committee expects that the Secretary-General will report on the outcome of the review in his next report on human resources management. Any revisions to the learning strategy should be submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration.**

34. In paragraph 66 of the report, it is indicated that the Office of Human Resources Management will deploy enterprise learning management, a module of Inspira, across the Organization in 2013. The benefits of that system include streamlining learning administration, consolidating learning content and materials and improving the tracking of learning, including the monitoring of the minimum target of five learning days per staff member per year established in the organizational learning and development policy. With regard to the latter benefit, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the Secretariat's capacity to track and monitor individual staff members' learning histories had, to date, been constrained by the absence of an enterprise learning management system.

35. The Advisory Committee recalls that it has previously pointed to the lack of a methodology and monitoring system to evaluate the results of training in peacekeeping and related areas, and has also expressed concern that there is a lack of oversight and monitoring to determine whether staff members receive the training they require, or whether, alternatively, some individuals are receiving unnecessary training or multiple training courses that are not related to their current area of responsibility (see, inter alia, A/56/941, para. 30, A/59/736, paras. 76 and 77, and A/65/743, para. 137). The Board of Auditors and the Office of Internal Oversight Services have also alluded to this issue (see A/58/384, annex, and A/59/253, paras. 81 and 122). **The Advisory Committee is therefore disappointed with the lack of discernible progress to date. This is a very unsatisfactory situation that does not serve the interests of the Organization and may undermine efforts to ensure the most prudent utilization of resources.**

36. **In the Advisory Committee's view, the ability to track individual staff members' learning histories will allow the Secretary-General to ensure the most efficient and effective use of training funds by, inter alia, eliminating duplication. It will also make it possible to establish clearer linkages between training and performance. The Committee considers that the absence of an enterprise learning management system should not have precluded the possibility of capturing staff members' learning histories, but trusts that the implementation, during the next reporting period, of the enterprise learning management module of Inspira will fully address this issue. The Committee expects that the Secretary-General will report on progress made in his next report on human resources management.** The Committee has commented more extensively on the monitoring and evaluation of training activities in its most recent report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/66/718, paras. 65-70).

Inspira

37. In his overview report, the Secretary-General recalls that Inspira, the software foundation of the new talent management system approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/244, provides the technology required to support the system in the areas of staffing, onboarding (now referred to as "offer management"), performance management, position management, the careers portal, analytical reporting, recruitment of consultants and enterprise learning management. He states that, since Inspira will ultimately support talent management both at headquarters locations and in the field, it will significantly strengthen the capacity of the Organization to plan, execute, monitor and report on issues related to its talent on a global basis (A/67/324, paras. 67 and 68).

38. In paragraphs 69 to 71 of the report, the Secretary-General describes the progress made in the implementation of Inspira during the reporting period. Key achievements include over 250 enhancements and fixes to the staffing module, the launch of e-performance (see also para. 18 above) and the launch of the enterprise learning management pilot. Figure III of the report provides a schematic overview of Inspira implementation to date, as well as the next steps envisaged.

39. With regard to the integration of Inspira and the enterprise resource planning system referred to in paragraph 77 of the overview report, the Secretary-General indicates, in his fourth progress report on the enterprise resource planning project, that full implementation of the human resources processes included in Umoja Extension 1 has been delayed until 31 December 2015 (A/67/360, annex IV). **While this delay is unwelcome, the Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will use the additional time to plan and prepare properly for the integration of the two systems, which will be vital if the benefits of both are to be fully realized. In this connection, the Committee reiterates its previously expressed view that the effective integration of Inspira and the enterprise resource planning system is key to the development of an efficient, responsive and comprehensive system for the management of the Organization's human resources, particularly in the critical area of workforce planning (A/66/779, para. 125; see also para. 12 above).**

Young professionals programme

40. Approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/247, the young professionals programme builds upon and replaces the former national competitive recruitment examination and incorporates the competitive examination for recruitment to the Professional category of staff from other categories (see Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2011/10). The Secretary-General indicates in his report that the first examination under the new system was held on 7 December 2011 and that 76 Member States participated. There were 33,791 applications, an increase of 208 per cent as compared to the 2010 examination, and of a total of 4,426 candidates who sat for the examination (an 81 per cent increase compared with 2010), 96 were successful. It took 11 months from the announcement of the examination to the establishment of the list of successful candidates. Despite the increase in the number of applications, the process was two months shorter than in 2010 (A/67/324, paras. 79-81). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that 15 of the 96 successful candidates had been placed as at 21 September 2012.

41. In paragraph 80 of the report, the Secretary-General recalls that his original proposal on the young professionals programme had suggested that the age limit for eligibility should be lowered from 32 to 26 and therefore that successful candidates should all enter the Organization at the P-1 level. However, since the General Assembly decided not to lower the age limit, the Secretary-General now invites it to confirm his understanding that the intention was also not to have all successful candidates enter at the P-1 level (see also para. 130 (a) of the overview report). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly confirm the Secretary-General's understanding that placement of successful candidates from the young professionals programme should be made at the P-1 or P-2 level, depending on whether candidates' qualifications satisfy the requirements of the relevant job description and on the availability of posts.**

42. It is indicated in paragraphs 82 and 83 and table 5 of the report that, during the reporting period, efforts have been undertaken to "right-size" the national competitive recruitment examination roster by contacting candidates to ascertain their desire to remain on it, updating their information and allowing qualified individuals to apply for the relevant P-3 roster. The Advisory Committee requested updated information as to the number of candidates remaining on the roster as at 21 September 2012. It was informed that, of the 419 candidates on the original roster as at 1 January 2012, 253 had indicated that they wished to remain on it and 166 had been removed. Of those 166, 34 could not be reached by telephone or e-mail, 12 were no longer interested in employment with the United Nations and 120 candidates did not respond. A total of 64 candidates had been placed during the period from January to September 2012, leaving a total of 189 candidates on the roster. The Committee was also provided with the following table, showing the year in which the candidates remaining on the P-2 and P-3 rosters took the examination:

Table 3
National competitive recruitment examination rosters (P-2 and P-3)

Exam year	*Number of candidates*
1993	3
1994	2
1995	1
1997	1
1998	1
1999	1
2000	2
2001	7
2002	6
2003	5
2004	12
2005	30
2006	10
2007	6
2008	26
2009	23
2010	53
Total	**189**

The Advisory Committee appreciates the efforts made by the Secretary-General to right-size the national competitive recruitment examination roster and trusts that the remaining candidates will be placed as soon as possible.

43. In paragraphs 85 and 86 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that a number of enhancements to the young professionals programme that were originally intended to be implemented in 2013 and beyond — including orientation and training for candidates prior to their placement and the allocation of a dedicated

training and professional development budget of $2,500 per young professional (see A/65/305/Add.4) — will have to be put on hold. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Office of Human Resources Management had decided to rely on a combination of e-learning tools and webinars to ensure that, prior to onboarding, new recruits had a basic knowledge of United Nations rules, regulations and standards. During their first year with the Organization, further induction training, additional e-learning tools and a face-to-face workshop would guide them through their initial deployment and prepare them for the managed reassignment programme. Other, more general training needs of young professionals would be met through existing staff development resources.

44. In paragraph 130 (b) of his report, the Secretary-General requests the General Assembly to endorse the amendments to the learning and development component of the young professionals programme. **The Advisory Committee has no objection to this course of action. The Committee expects that the Secretary-General will monitor the impact of those amendments on the programme and report on his findings in the context of his next report on human resources management.**

45. With regard to the possibility of staff members serving in the General Service and other categories being appointed to the Professional category, the Secretary-General indicates in paragraph 88 of his report that, as part of efforts "to ensure that all Member States ... are adequately represented in the Secretariat", the Secretariat has, since 1996, permitted staff members who are nationals of a country participating in the national competitive recruitment examination or young professionals programme to apply for participation in the examination or programme as external candidates if they meet the eligibility criteria (the so-called "G to N" arrangement). He notes that, between 1996 and 2011, a total of 1,329 staff members applied in this category and 85 were successful.

46. In the same paragraph, the Secretary-General also indicates that, while the "G to N" arrangement has been applied in the Secretariat since 1996, it has never been put before the General Assembly for formal endorsement. In his view, it would be useful to secure such endorsement (see also para. 130 (c) of the overview report). **While regretting that intergovernmental approval for the "G to N" arrangement was not sought earlier, the Advisory Committee does not object to its continuation, on the understanding that serving staff members applying for the young professionals programme must meet the same eligibility criteria as all other candidates, including the requirement for a university degree.**

Representation of Member States in the Secretariat

47. Paragraphs 90 to 94 of the overview report address the issue of increasing the representation of unrepresented and underrepresented countries in the Secretariat with a view to attaining the goal of equitable geographical distribution. It is stated that the focus of the Secretary-General's efforts during the reporting period has been outreach, carried out primarily by the dedicated unit established in 2008 in the Office of Human Resources Management. As well as liaising with permanent missions and Governments and conducting in-person visits to target countries, the Secretariat utilizes the online United Nations careers portal, as well as various social media networks, to reach out to potential applicants.

48. In addition, as indicated in paragraphs 95 to 98 of his report, the Secretary-General has taken steps to respond to the request of the General Assembly that he

effectively increase the representation of developing countries in the Secretariat. It is stated, in particular, that work has been undertaken to attract more applicants from developing countries with language skills in French and Arabic, since those skills are in demand in field missions.

49. The Secretary-General indicates that, going forward, the Secretariat will continue to develop its social media networks and to work with Member States on outreach activities. The Office of Human Resources Management will collaborate with the Department of Field Support in order to identify candidates from troop- and police-contributing countries, and efforts will be made to improve the applicant data collected in Inspira in order to measure the impact of outreach activities. **The Advisory Committee notes the efforts made to reach out to potential employees from unrepresented and underrepresented, as well as developing, countries but takes the view that they have been ineffective. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to develop a comprehensive strategy to improve geographical representation, based on an in-depth analysis of the real causes of the current imbalances. The Secretary-General should submit concrete proposals for the consideration of the Assembly in his next report on human resources management. Information on the effectiveness of the various types of outreach activities undertaken to date, including statistical indicators, should also be provided in that report.**

50. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that the new human resources management scorecard, introduced in 2011, includes geographical representation as one of its priority indicators (see A/65/305, para. 149). **The Committee trusts that the improved monitoring capability offered by the scorecard will allow the Office of Human Resources Management to detect trends in geographical representation more quickly and take appropriate corrective measures.**

51. With regard to the system of desirable ranges, the General Assembly, in its resolution 65/247, recalling section IX, paragraph 17, of its resolution 63/250, requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-seventh session on proposals for a comprehensive review of the system of desirable ranges, with a view to establishing a more effective tool to ensure equitable geographical distribution in relation to the total number of staff in the global United Nations Secretariat.

52. In paragraph 102 of the overview report, the Secretary-General indicates that the introduction of changes to the system of desirable ranges is an issue marked by complexity. That complexity is intensified, he maintains, when the possibility of extending the system to posts in the field, financed under the regular budget and the peacekeeping budget, is considered. Accordingly, rather than submitting a proposal to the current session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General has decided to seek the views of the Assembly on the following issues:

- The types of posts and sources of funding that should be covered by the system of desirable ranges
- Whether the contribution weighting factor requires amendment
- Whether the posts to be included in the system should be established for a minimum length of time and/or whether they should be included on the basis of projections of continuing need

- The intention of the Assembly when it referred to the "proper" representation of troop-contributing countries (see resolutions 66/265, 66/246, 65/290, 65/247, 64/271, 64/243, 63/287, 63/250, 62/250, 61/279, 56/241 and 55/238)

The Secretary-General states, in paragraph 104 of his report, that once those views are received, the Secretariat will, as a matter of priority, formulate a revised approach, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, for the consideration of the Assembly at its sixty-eighth session.

53. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in addendum 2 to his previous report on human resources management reform, the Secretary-General, in responding to the request of the General Assembly as set out in its resolution 63/250 (see para. 51 above), reviewed the origin and purpose of the system of desirable ranges, which was established in 1960 to measure progress towards equitable geographical distribution (see General Assembly resolution 1559 (XV)), and outlined the changes to the system that had taken place since then (see A/65/305/Add.2). He also updated the scenarios presented in his earlier report on that issue (A/59/724) in order to illustrate how Member State representation could potentially change as a result of various adjustments to the weightings and base figures. In its comments and observations on that report, the Committee expressed the view that it did not adequately respond to the General Assembly's request since it did not introduce any new elements that could enhance the effectiveness of the system. Moreover, the report did not provide any recommendations (A/65/537, paras. 61-62).

54. **In the Advisory Committee's view, it is regrettable that the Secretary-General has failed, on successive occasions, to respond appropriately to the request of the General Assembly that he present proposals for a comprehensive review of the system of desirable ranges. While emphasizing that the final policy decision rests with the Assembly, the Committee believes that it is incumbent upon the Secretary-General to respond to the repeated requests of the Assembly by submitting concrete proposals to serve as a basis for the Assembly's deliberations on the issue. The Committee takes the view, moreover, that the requests contained in Assembly resolutions 63/250 and 65/247 provide sufficient guidance as to the issues that should be addressed by such proposals, in particular that their aim should be to establish a more effective tool to ensure equitable geographical distribution in relation to the total number of staff in the global Secretariat. The Committee therefore expects that the relevant proposals will be submitted as soon as possible, and no later than at the sixty-eighth session. The Assembly may wish to provide the Secretary-General with any further guidance that it deems necessary.**

55. The Advisory Committee has commented further on the current status of posts subject to the system of desirable ranges in paragraphs 143 to 146 below.

Gender parity

56. In paragraphs 106 to 108 of his overview report, the Secretary-General provides information on the steps taken and envisaged to address the continuing gaps in the representation of women in the Secretariat. It is stated, in particular, that work has started with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to develop a comprehensive strategy to attract and retain women, particularly at senior levels. Going forward, the Secretary-General indicates that the strategy will take on a system-wide dimension, focusing

on facilitating the advancement to senior positions of women already within the Organization and on targeting qualified external female candidates.

57. In this connection, paragraph 19 of the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/67/329) indicates that, as at 30 June 2012, female staff accounted for only 33 per cent of the total staff population of the Secretariat. Figures IX and X of that report clearly illustrate that the gender disparity is significantly more pronounced in field operations, where women account for only 21 per cent of the total staff population as compared to 48 per cent in non-field operations. Table 10 shows that women are still underrepresented at senior levels, accounting for 27 per cent of all staff at the D-1 and Under-Secretary-General levels and 23 per cent of those at the D-2 and Assistant Secretary-General levels. **The Advisory Committee is particularly discouraged to note from table 2 of the composition report that, despite repeated urging from the Committee and the General Assembly (most recently in resolution 65/247), the ratio of female staff to total staff has remained static at approximately 33 per cent for the past five years.**

58. **The Advisory Committee considers that, as evidenced by the statistics provided in the preceding paragraph, the efforts undertaken to date to improve the representation of women in the Secretariat have been inadequate. The Committee notes the decision of the Secretary-General to develop a comprehensive strategy to attract and retain women, particularly at senior levels. In the Committee's view, that strategy must be based on a detailed analysis of the real causes of the persistent gender imbalance in the Secretariat, since effective remedies will be found only if the underlying problems, which may vary by department/office and/or location, are clearly defined and understood. The Secretary-General should submit, as part of his next report on human resources management, concrete proposals to the General Assembly for its consideration.**

Staff health and well-being

59. Issues relating to the health and well-being of United Nations staff are discussed in paragraphs 113 to 121 of the overview report. The Secretary-General notes that deployments to field duty stations, particularly in areas with limited medical and health-care infrastructure, come with an increased risk to health and safety. To mitigate that risk, the Medical Services Division of the Office of Human Resources Management has taken a number of measures to improve care and support for staff, including the integration into its organizational structure of the medical component of the Emergency Preparedness and Support Team, the expansion of its medical electronic records system and the redesign of its website to better address occupational, environmental and preventative health issues.

60. As far as work-life balance is concerned, the Secretary-General reports that a comprehensive three-year strategy for the strengthening of flexible working arrangements, focusing on advocacy, support and tracking of usage, has been developed. The human resources management scorecard was used to establish baseline indicators for 2011, against which future progress will be measured. In addition, a pilot of expanded flexible working arrangements was undertaken with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the Department of Public Information and the Office of Internal Oversight Services. It is the

Secretary-General's intention to use the results of the pilot to identify appropriate next steps.

Staff-management relations

61. The Advisory Committee recalls that, pursuant to regulation 8.1 (a) of the Staff Regulations and Rules, the Secretary-General is to establish and maintain continuous contact and communication with the staff in order to ensure their effective participation in identifying, examining and resolving issues relating to staff welfare, including conditions of work, general conditions of life and other human resources policies. As indicated in paragraph 122 of the overview report, during the reporting period the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and other members of senior management have met on a number of occasions with the leaders of the staff associations, unions and councils to discuss such matters.

62. In paragraph 123 of his report, the Secretary-General states that the Staff-Management Committee was established in September 2011 as a new framework for staff-management relations and that, during the reporting period, the United Nations Staff Union (New York) joined the Committee. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that pursuant to regulation 8.2 of the Staff Regulations and Rules, the Secretary-General is to establish joint staff-management machinery at both local and Secretariat-wide levels to advise him or her regarding human resources policies and general questions of staff welfare as provided in regulation 8.1 (see para. 61 above). **The Advisory Committee has concerns about whether the role of the Staff-Management Committee as described by the Secretary-General in paragraph 123 of his report, namely as a forum in which staff and management come together to negotiate and build consensus on human resources reform initiatives, is in conformity with the provisions of staff regulation 8.1, which stipulates that the Secretary-General is to establish and maintain continuous contact and communication with the staff in order to ensure their effective participation in identifying, examining and resolving issues relating to staff welfare, including conditions of work, general conditions of life and other human resources policies. The General Assembly may therefore wish to review the provisions of staff regulation 8.1 with a view to providing clarity on this issue.**

63. The Advisory Committee was also informed that, pursuant to the Secretary-General's bulletin on implementation of regulation 8.2 and rule 8.2 of the Staff Regulations and Rules, the Staff-Management Committee must agree by consensus on those issues within the authority of the Secretary-General. For matters outside the authority of the Secretary-General, the Staff-Management Committee is to agree on a position to be presented to the General Assembly (see ST/SGB/2011/6, section 1.3).

Liabilities from administrative service arrangements

64. Section IV.J of the overview report addresses the issue of potential liabilities arising from administrative service arrangements entered into by the United Nations Secretariat. Those arrangements, whereby the Secretariat provides administrative services, including advisory services, to non-Secretariat entities that do not have sufficient in-house capacity for self-administration or that wish to benefit from economies of scale resulting from the streamlined provision of such services, are entered into on the basis of "institutional linkages" approved by the General

Assembly and/or memorandums of understanding agreed upon by the entities concerned.

65. The Secretary-General indicates that, while the staff of the entities concerned are not Secretariat staff, their appointments are governed by the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. In order to ensure that the employing entity, rather than the administering one, that is, the Secretariat, is held liable in the event of legal challenges to administrative decisions, the letters of appointment of those staff normally contain a clause that limits their service exclusively to the entity concerned.

66. The Secretary-General states, however, that recent developments in relevant jurisprudence, in particular a February 2012 decision of the International Court of Justice affirming the financial liability of an administering entity for administrative decisions taken in respect of staff members of an employing entity, have highlighted the need to review the way in which administrative service arrangements are designed in order to limit potential liability. He also indicates that some bilateral agreements should be revised to reflect the recent reforms of the system for the administration of justice and to ensure the proper allocation of financial responsibilities. Lastly, he notes that there can be further legal complications when committees of the General Assembly other than the Fifth Committee take decisions on administrative arrangements, since those decisions can be legally ambiguous and leave room for interpretation. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls General Assembly resolution 66/246, in which the Assembly reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters.

67. In paragraph 130 (e) of the overview report, the Secretary-General requests the General Assembly to take note of the issue of liabilities from administrative service arrangements. **In the Advisory Committee's view, this is a matter of serious concern requiring urgent attention. Accordingly, it recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, through the Office of Human Resources Management and/or the Office of Legal Affairs, as appropriate, to work with the entities concerned in order to amend all administrative service arrangements to ensure that the Secretariat, as the administering entity, cannot be held financially liable for administrative decisions taken by employing entities.**

III. Mobility

68. In his report contained in document A/67/324/Add.1, the Secretary-General submits to the General Assembly, for its consideration, a proposed mobility and career development framework for staff in the Professional and higher and Field Service categories. According to the Secretary-General, the proposed framework is based on the principle that, with few exceptions, all internationally recruited staff should move at regular intervals and that staff should be able to make choices that meet their mobility and career development aspirations. It is also designed to strengthen the Organization's capacity to deliver on its mandates by allowing for the more strategic deployment of staff. The proposed framework establishes maximum position occupancy limits depending on the hardship classification of the duty station, and staff would be expected to apply for positions before reaching the

relevant occupancy limit. To encourage geographic and functional mobility, priority in selection would be given to internal staff applying to a different duty station or to a different job family. The Secretary-General indicates that the proposed mobility and career development framework presented in his report is the result of extensive negotiations between management and staff representatives during the first meeting of the Staff-Management Committee in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania (A/67/324/Add.1, paras. 2, 4 and 15).

69. The Advisory Committee has previously expressed its support for the promotion of staff mobility (see, inter alia, A/61/537, para. 30, and A/62/7/Add.14, para. 40). The Committee recalls, in this regard, that the General Assembly has already decided, in its resolution 65/247, that staff members who are granted continuing contracts will be subject to its decisions on mobility. The Committee recognizes that, in recent years, the increasing focus on field operations has brought about changes in the way in which the Organization approaches its staffing needs. The Committee also considers that the reform of contractual arrangements, the harmonization of conditions of service and the application of the mobility and hardship allowance have removed many of the barriers to the flexible deployment of staff that is the backbone of a comprehensive mobility scheme. The Committee therefore believes that a better managed organizational mobility programme has the potential to contribute to improving the delivery of mandates and also to respond better to the career aspirations of staff. In that connection, the Committee considers that the stated objectives of the new mobility and career development framework proposed by the Secretary-General are legitimate, and it appreciates the efforts he has undertaken to incorporate lessons learned from previous initiatives and to address the concerns raised by the oversight bodies.

70. The Advisory Committee recalls, however, that in its resolution 63/250 the General Assembly requested that the Secretary-General present proposals aimed at encouraging the voluntary mobility of staff in the context of the review of the mobility policy. Since the framework proposed in the Secretary-General's present report goes beyond a purely voluntary system, the Committee takes the view that more information and analysis should have been provided to justify the move towards a managed system.

71. The Advisory Committee considers that the proposed framework set out in the Secretary-General's report is not sufficiently detailed: too many of its major components are as yet undefined. Nor is the Committee convinced that the proposed framework fully addresses the problems it seeks to resolve or that it will yield all the benefits identified by the Secretary-General. Accordingly, in the paragraphs below, the Advisory Committee discusses the various elements of the proposed mobility and career development framework in more depth, highlighting those areas that, in its view, require further clarification, development and/or adjustment. Bearing in mind the concerns expressed by the Board of Auditors regarding the absence of a realistic assessment of the ability of the Organization to absorb change and deliver on its ongoing mandates (see A/67/5 (Vol. I), chap. II, para. 181), the Committee is also of the view that further explanation is needed of how the proposed framework dovetails with other ongoing management reform initiatives. The Committee's overall recommendation on the Secretary-General's proposal is contained in paragraphs 135 and 136 below.

Background

72. A definition of mobility, for the purposes of the proposed framework, is set out in paragraph 27 of the Secretary-General's report. In essence, mobility, which can be achieved via a lateral move or a move to a position at a higher level, is defined as a change of position, which can involve one or a combination of: a change of role; a change of function; a change of department; a change of duty station; or a move from the Secretariat to a United Nations agency, fund or programme. In paragraph 28 of the report, the Secretary-General specifies that geographic mobility would not be a requirement for all staff, and it was indicated to the Advisory Committee, upon enquiry, that the focus of the proposal was on changes of position rather than on changes of duty station. However, it is further stated in paragraph 28 of the report that, in order to ensure that senior managers have a broader understanding of the work of the United Nations through exposure to different duty stations, a staff member would need at least one prior geographic move of one year or more to progress to positions at the P-5, D-1 and D-2 levels.

73. In paragraph 17 of his report, the Secretary-General sets out the intended objectives of the proposed framework. They are as follows:

(a) To enable the Organization to better retain and deploy a dynamic, adaptable and global workforce that can effectively meet current and future mandates and evolving operational needs;

(b) To provide staff with broader opportunities for career development and contribution to the Organization and enable the further acquisition of new skills, knowledge and experience within and across departments, functions and duty stations;

(c) To ensure that staff members have equal opportunities for service across the United Nations and, for relevant functions, a fair sharing of the burden of service in difficult duty stations.

74. In section V of his report, the Secretary-General describes the benefits he expects from the proposed framework, namely, better vacancy management; less time spent by managers on staffing tasks; the creation of a more global workforce; a more coherent approach to career development; and improved staff performance. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed, inter alia, that the framework would also contribute to alleviating welfare issues, such as stress, absenteeism and substance abuse, that could arise as a result of staff members being "stuck" in difficult and dangerous duty stations for long periods of time. It was also hoped that turnover rates would come down as fewer staff would leave the system owing to frustration about lack of career development.

75. The Advisory Committee notes that, as indicated in paragraph 1 of the report, the approval by the General Assembly of streamlined contractual arrangements and the harmonization of conditions of service in the field enabled the integration of the field and Headquarters and removed a number of barriers to the mobility of staff. In section II of his report, the Secretary-General describes further the context in which he is making his proposal. He recalls, in particular, that enhancing staff mobility has been part of the human resources strategy of the Organization since the early 1990s and was recognized as essential in both the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (the "Brahimi report") (A/55/305) and the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Investing in people" (A/61/255). He also points out that, in

successive resolutions, the General Assembly has requested the Secretary-General to pursue a policy of organizational mobility (see, inter alia, resolutions 49/222, 51/226 and 53/221). Lastly, he suggests that his proposal responds to the views expressed by staff on the issue of mobility: the results of a Secretariat-wide survey conducted in January 2012 revealed that 79 per cent of internationally recruited staff had expected to work in different duty stations when they joined the Secretariat; 86 per cent of staff considered it important that internationally recruited staff work in different departments, offices and missions; and over 70 per cent of staff believed that they should move to new positions every few years. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with the full set of survey questions and responses.

76. In paragraphs 8 to 11 of the report, the Secretary-General indicates that a number of measures have already been taken to promote mobility in the Organization. In 2000, a centrally managed reassignment programme was introduced for junior Professional staff who had entered via the national competitive recruitment examination, and the new young professionals programme incorporates geographic mobility by providing that successful candidates' second assignments should be at a different duty station. In 2002, a mobility policy, including position occupancy limits and managed reassignment, was established as a central part of the staff selection system. In 2008, the voluntary initiative for network exchange programme (VINEs) was launched, as a means of facilitating lateral job swaps among participating staff.

77. The Secretary-General notes in his report that the latter two initiatives — the 2002 mobility policy and the 2008 VINEs programme — were discontinued. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, after having carefully reviewed those initiatives, the Office of Human Resources Management had concluded that a purely voluntary mobility system did not work because it did not facilitate a sufficient number of moves. In addition, the managed mobility policy introduced in 2002 was limited in scope due to the contractual arrangements in force at the time (see A/63/208, para. 62) and may have been perceived as inequitable, since it was implemented by level, starting with the more junior Professional and General Service staff.

78. During its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee requested statistical information on current patterns of mobility. **To the Committee's disappointment, however, the Secretary-General was unable to provide a reliable estimate of the number of staff who had, over the past five years, changed duty station for a period of one year or longer. The Committee is seriously concerned by the Secretary-General's inability to provide accurate and reliable historical data on staff mobility patterns. Since this information is essential to an assessment of the potential impact of the Secretary-General's proposal, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide the relevant data, validated if necessary by the Board of Auditors, as part of the comprehensive report referred to in paragraph 136 below.**

79. In paragraph 18 of his report, the Secretary-General states that the proposed framework strikes a balance between a purely voluntary and a fully centrally managed system. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the proposal drew on lessons learned from the previous initiatives mentioned in paragraphs 76 and 77 above, and also addressed some of the concerns — relating,

inter alia, to institutional memory and knowledge management, career development, costs and legal restrictions relating to spouse employment — raised by the Joint Inspection Unit in its reports on mobility (A/61/806 and A/66/355) and by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in its in-depth evaluation of the Office of Human Resources Management (A/63/221). It also aimed to address the imbalances identified in current mobility patterns and to give due consideration to organizational priorities rather than just accommodating individual preferences.

Scope

80. The Secretary-General indicates that the proposed framework would apply to all internal staff[1] of the Secretariat in the Professional category and above (from the P-1 to D-2 levels), as well as to staff in the Field Service category, holding fixed-term, continuing and permanent appointments, except those in positions designated as non-rotational. Staff at the P-1/P-2 level who were appointed through the national competitive recruitment examination/young professionals programme would not be included as they are already subject to a managed reassignment programme (see para. 43 above). Staff members within five years of the mandatory age of separation, as well as those with at least seven prior geographic moves, could choose to be exempted from geographic mobility (A/67/324/Add.1, paras. 19-21). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 30 June 2012, 14,185 staff members would be subject to the proposed framework. The Committee was further informed that 1,840 of those 14,185 staff members could be exempted from geographic mobility because they were within five years of the mandatory age of separation and a further 4 staff members could be exempted because they had already completed seven or more geographic moves.

81. **In the Advisory Committee's view, the impact of the proposed mobility and career development framework will vary depending on staff members' appointment type (fixed-term, continuing or permanent). The General Assembly may wish to request the Secretary-General to explore this issue in more depth in his next report on this question.**

82. As indicated in paragraph 80 above, staff encumbering positions designated as non-rotational would not be subject to the proposed mobility framework. In his report, the Secretary-General explains that a non-rotational position is one that requires an advanced level of expertise, knowledge and qualifications in a technical field and where there is no comparable position at the same level in another organizational unit or duty station in the Secretariat (A/67/324/Add.1, para. 20). During its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee was informed that staff encumbering positions designated as non-rotational would receive letters of appointment stipulating that they were exempt from mobility. If those staff members subsequently applied and were selected for rotational positions, their letters of appointment would be amended accordingly.

83. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Office of Human Resources Management was currently consulting with departments and offices in order to determine which specific positions would be designated as

[1] According to the Secretary-General, internal staff are those who have gone through a competitive process, including review by a field/central review body, and whose appointment is not limited to a specific department/office/mission.

non-rotational. The Committee was further informed that, for the purposes of the indicative costing scenario described in paragraphs 125 and 126 below, it had been assumed that 384 positions of the total number of 14,185 included in the proposed mobility framework would be non-rotational. In order to arrive at that figure, it had been assumed that there would be no non-rotational positions in the management and operations support, political, peace and security, and safety and security job networks; that 10 per cent of positions in the conference services, economic and social development, public information and external relations, and information and communications technology job networks would be non-rotational; and that 20 per cent of positions in the legal job network would be non-rotational.

84. **The Advisory Committee recognizes that there are some specialized positions in the Secretariat that are not suitable for inclusion in the proposed mobility and career development framework. However, the Committee is disappointed to learn that the Secretary-General did not better define the scope of his proposal by identifying the number and precise type of positions, given the significant impact of this aspect of the proposed framework on its overall effectiveness. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to complete that work as a matter of priority and to present the results to the Assembly in his next report on this question. The Committee points out, in this regard, that a robust workforce planning system, including a directory of skills sets, would greatly facilitate the Secretary-General's endeavour.**

85. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that 4,120 of the 14,185 staff members who would be subject to the proposed mobility and career development framework were in the Field Service category, and that 80 per cent of those individuals were serving in D and E duty stations (the remaining 20 per cent of Field Service positions are in C duty stations). Since posts in the Professional/Director category and posts in the Field Service category were not interchangeable, Field Service staff would change positions only with other Field Service staff and would therefore rotate only among C, D and E duty stations.

86. As indicated in paragraph 73 above, one of the primary objectives of the mobility framework is to share the burden of service in hardship duty stations more equitably, thereby alleviating a number of welfare and other issues associated with staff members getting "stuck" in those locations for long periods of time. The Committee notes, however, from table 4 of the report of the Secretary-General that 851 of the 1,268 staff members, or 67 per cent, who have served in one or several D or E duty stations for more than five years are in the Field Service category.[2]

87. **The Advisory Committee considers that, while the mobility and career development framework proposed by the Secretary-General may contribute to alleviating the situation of Professional staff who have served in hardship duty stations for long periods of time without being able to move, it does not fully address the issue of sharing the burden of service in hardship duty stations, given that the majority of Field Service positions are in category D and E duty stations and that staff occupying those positions therefore have only limited opportunities to rotate out of those duty stations. While acknowledging that**

[2] Some of these staff may have changed duty station but they have remained in the same hardship classification.

some relief may be provided to Field Service staff if they are able to change duty station, albeit by moving from one D or E location to another, the Committee believes that further consideration should be given to this aspect of the proposal.

88. **The Advisory Committee takes the view that there is an urgent need to ensure a more equitable sharing of the burden of service in hardship duty stations, and that a solution to that problem does not require the introduction of a formal mobility policy. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, when making selection decisions, to give, with immediate effect, priority among internal candidates to staff who have served in hardship duty stations for long periods of time without being able to move, and to propose subsequently any additional measures he deems necessary to address this situation to the Assembly in the context of his next report on this question.**

Position occupancy limits

89. The Secretary-General indicates in paragraph 25 of his report that, under the proposed framework, staff encumbering rotational positions would be subject to minimum and maximum occupancy limits. The minimum would be one year for all positions, with the maximum being seven years for H and A duty stations, four years for B and C duty stations and three years for D and E duty stations. Occupancy of a position would be governed by the following three marks:

(a) Mark 1: Minimum position occupancy, that is, one year;

(b) Mark 2: 12 months before maximum position occupancy for staff in B to E duty stations and 24 months before maximum position occupancy for staff in H and A duty stations;

(c) Mark 3: Staff members who have reached the maximum occupancy limit.

90. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the maximum occupancy limit for staff in more difficult duty stations would be shorter because of the challenging living conditions in those locations, and that other international organizations, such as the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), had implemented similar staggered position occupancy limits for the same reason. The Committee was further informed that lessons learned from the implementation of the 2002 mobility policy suggested that staff tended to move themselves prior to becoming subject to reassignment. In fact, during the managed reassignment exercise conducted between May 2007 and November 2008, only 56 of the 1,653 staff members at the P-3 level (3.4 per cent), 45 of the 1,050 staff members at the P-4 level (4.3 per cent), 22 of the 1,266 staff members at the P-5 level (1.7 per cent), 15 of the 463 staff members at the D-1 level (3.2 per cent) and 3 of the 162 staff members at the D-2 level (1.9 per cent) who were subject to the policy reached their maximum occupancy limit and were therefore eligible for managed reassignment.

91. Table 11 of the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/67/329) shows that the average length of service for staff in the Secretariat is 6.4 years. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with

more detailed information on the average length of service of Secretariat staff, which is contained in the annex to the present report.

92. **The Advisory Committee understands the rationale behind the introduction of maximum position occupancy limits in the context of a managed mobility system. With regard to the minimum occupancy limit, while recognizing that the Secretary-General needs to retain the flexibility to redeploy staff quickly to meet emerging needs, the Committee is of the view that one year is not sufficient to allow staff members to reach their full potential in a new position. It may also lead to a renewed increase in turnover rates, particularly in peacekeeping missions, where those rates have recently begun to come down (see A/66/718, paras. 42 and 43) and, if robust systems for the transfer of knowledge are not in place, a concomitant erosion of institutional memory. While noting that the proposed process for the selection and reassignment of candidates aims to address this issue by prioritizing those at mark 2 (see para. 98 below), the Committee nevertheless considers that turnover rates will need to be closely monitored.**

Job networks

93. In paragraphs 22 to 24 of his report, the Secretary-General states that the proposed mobility and career development framework would be managed within job networks. He asserts that this will provide a more coherent approach to the career development of staff and a better linkage between career development and evolving operational needs because, as indicated in paragraph 46 of his report, job networks will be able to provide greater clarity on the knowledge, attributes and experience expected of staff in different functions with a view to the future needs of the Organization.

94. Under the proposed framework, each job network would have a job network board, consisting of representatives of staff, management and the Office of Human Resources Management, responsible for making recommendations to the Secretary-General on the selection and reassignment of staff within that network (see paras. 104-112 below for further discussion of the job network boards). Recommendations for the selection and reassignment of staff at the D-1 and D-2 levels would be undertaken by a single senior review board composed of Assistant Secretaries-General and Under-Secretaries-General. Job network boards would also be responsible for defining any network-specific mobility requirements, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources Management and with the agreement of the Staff-Management Committee. The Secretary-General indicates that job networks would be supported by teams of network staffing officers with human resources expertise and operational knowledge of the particular job network, who would carry out human resources activities related to the selection process and would also act as career advisers to staff members, providing them with guidance on which positions to apply for and recommending relevant learning activities.

95. It is stated in the report of the Secretary-General that there are currently eight job networks, with varying distributions of staff members among the different hardship classifications of duty station. The Secretary-General acknowledges in this connection that one size does not fit all, that is, that staff in some networks would have limited options for service in other duty stations while others would have many. To address that situation, he indicates that the current job networks will be

reconfigured. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that that exercise would entail ensuring that the job networks were of a more consistent size to facilitate better management, as well as further improving the grouping of similar functions in order to maximize opportunities for mobility. It was expected that the existing 8 job networks would be expanded to between 10 and 12. In his report, the Secretary-General specifies that, following the two-year preparation phase (see paras. 117-122 below), the proposed mobility framework would be implemented in a phased manner by job network (A/67/324/Add.1, para. 54). The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that a decision on which network(s) to phase in first would be based on the Organization's priorities and needs, the readiness of networks to establish job network boards and determine any network-specific mobility requirements, the number and distribution of staff in the various networks and the cost implications.

96. **The Advisory Committee takes the view that further clarity is needed on the expected number and configuration of job networks and on how they would be phased in. More information on how the teams of network staffing officers would be established, as well as a more detailed explanation of their precise role, functions and authority, is also required. The Committee also considers it important that additional network-specific mobility requirements be clearly defined before a final decision is taken on the proposed framework. In this connection, the Committee reiterates its observation that a robust workforce planning system, including a directory of skills sets, would greatly facilitate this work.**

Selection and reassignment

97. As indicated in paragraphs 30 to 33 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/67/324/Add.1), the proposed mobility and career development framework would require significant changes in the way the Organization manages the internal and external selection of staff. Under the proposed framework, staff would be expected to apply for advertised vacancies before reaching the maximum time for occupying a position. They would be able to apply at their current level or one level higher. Positions would be advertised in compendiums on a quarterly basis or more frequently if necessary to meet surge needs or to fill vacancies.

98. In order to facilitate mobility, the Secretary-General proposes that eligible internal staff would be considered for positions first, and that certain categories of internal staff would be given priority in the application process. Upon enquiry as to the system for prioritization, the Advisory Committee was informed that, when reviewing candidates for selection and reassignment, network staffing officers would take the following priorities into consideration:

(a) **Priority 1**: Staff at mark 2 applying from non-headquarters duty stations to another duty station or staff on a post to be abolished who are at any mark and are applying to a vacant post at their current grade level;

(b) **Priority 2**: Staff at mark 2 applying from headquarters duty stations to another duty station or applying to a different function from the same or another duty station;

(c) **Priority 3**: Any other staff at mark 2;

(d) **Priority 4**: Staff who are between mark 1 and mark 2 applying from another duty station.

99. The Advisory Committee was further informed, upon enquiry, that the aim of the prioritization system was to facilitate geographic and functional mobility, help provide some relief to staff in hardship duty stations and assist staff in downsizing missions with finding another suitable post. The reason for prioritizing candidates at mark 2 was to ensure that staff did not move too quickly after starting a new position, while at the same time promoting voluntary movement before they reached their maximum occupancy limit and became subject to reassignment.

100. **The Advisory Committee recognizes that a system for prioritizing certain categories of internal candidates in the selection and reassignment of internal staff is necessary if the proposed mobility and career development framework is to achieve its stated objectives (see also para. 88 above). It is unclear to the Committee, however, how promotions will fit within the proposed new selection and reassignment process, and the Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to elaborate on this aspect of the proposed framework in his next report on the matter.**

101. The Secretary-General indicates that under the proposed framework external candidates would be considered only if no internal candidates were found suitable (A/67/324/Add.1, para. 31). Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with statistical information on recruitment rates for external candidates over the past five years. The Committee notes from the information that during that period external candidates accounted for 25 per cent of the candidates selected for the 5,070 vacancies at headquarters duty stations, 63 per cent of the 61 vacancies at D duty stations and 55 per cent of the 92 vacancies at E duty stations.

102. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was also provided with background information on the history of the staff selection system, describing how internal and external candidates had been treated in the past. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the changes to the current staff selection system required to implement the proposed mobility framework would necessitate a revision of a number of earlier General Assembly decisions, such as those requiring the announcement of all positions (see resolution 51/226, para. 5) and the deletion of the special procedures for the selection of external candidates (see resolution 65/247, para. 19). In addition, a new Secretary-General's bulletin would need to be issued on the mobility framework, a new administrative instruction would need to be promulgated on the arrangements for those staff who would be subject to the mobility framework and the current administrative instruction on the staff selection system (ST/AI/2010/3 and Amend.1) would need to be amended to address the situation of those staff who would not be covered by the framework.

103. **The Advisory Committee is seriously concerned about the potential effect of the current proposal on external recruitment and, by extension, on merit-based selection, geographical representation and gender balance. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the paramount consideration in the employment of staff must be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. In the view of the Committee, the only way to achieve that aim, as well as to ensure respect for the principles of geographical diversity and gender parity in the staffing of the Organization, is through merit-based, competitive selection processes. If the capacity of the**

Organization to bring in new talent is constrained by the need to place internal candidates first, there is a risk that the Secretariat will become "closed" to external applicants, thereby potentially limiting the ability of managers to select the best candidates on as wide a geographical basis as possible. In addition, reverting to a multi-stage selection process where external applicants are considered only when no suitable internal candidates have been found may actually increase the time taken to fill vacant posts. In view of these concerns, and of the many decisions of the General Assembly on this matter, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to adjust his proposal to ensure that external candidates will have equal opportunity in the selection and appointment process for positions in the Secretariat.

104. The Secretary-General describes the process for the advertisement of posts and the review and selection of candidates in paragraph 32 of his report. He indicates that hiring managers would establish the criteria for a job opening; network staffing officers would screen candidates for eligibility, compile a list of suitable candidates, invite managers to transmit any additional views on how the candidates meet the criteria and then transmit preliminary recommendations to the job network boards; and, lastly, job network boards would review all suitable candidates for all positions advertised and recommend selection decisions to the Secretary-General. According to the Secretary-General, this process will ensure better vacancy management because, unlike individual hiring managers, who only have a view of the needs of their own department/office, the job network boards will have a global view of the supply and demand of staff and of the available talent pool within each network. The Secretary-General states that this will allow for more strategic choices to be made about the placement of staff in order to meet organizational needs, and also allow managers to spend significantly less time on staffing tasks, thereby enabling an increased focus on their substantive responsibilities (A/67/324/Add.1, paras. 41 and 42). The Advisory Committee recalls, in this connection, that hiring managers are currently taking 112 days to recommend candidates, as compared with the target of 40 days (see para. 15 above).

105. The Secretary-General indicates that job network boards would also be responsible for reassigning staff who have not been selected for a position before reaching their maximum occupancy limit. Those staff, who would be placed in a reassignment pool, could be reassigned to any position the board finds suitable, without having necessarily applied, although the boards will make their best efforts to reassign staff members serving in D or E duty stations who have reached their maximum occupancy limit to duty stations that are not categorized as D or E (A/67/324/Add.1, paras. 34 and 35).

106. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Secretary-General expected that the proposed new selection and reassignment process would speed up recruitment and deployment because the selection of staff would be more efficiently and systematically managed within job networks on the basis of clear criteria. The Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that under the proposed framework the process for the assessment of the suitability of candidates for posts at their current level would be separate from the selection and reassignment process, in that candidates would be cleared for selection prior to applying for positions. As a result, the Secretary-General expected that the new selection and reassignment process would take 90 days rather than the current average of 112 days.

107. As indicated in paragraph 94 above, it is proposed that the job network boards be composed of representatives of staff, management and the Office of Human Resources Management. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the boards would comprise representatives of staff and management in equal numbers, in line with the practice followed at UNHCR. The representatives of staff would serve in their individual capacity, not as elected union representatives. Board members would need to be at the same grade level as the positions they were reviewing or higher and from the relevant job network. Hiring managers would not serve on the boards but their comments on the shortlist of qualified candidates would be taken into account at every step of the selection and recommendation process. The Committee was further informed that the boards were expected to meet on a quarterly basis but could be convened more often to respond to emergency or surge needs. The Committee was also informed that, with the introduction of job network boards, the central review bodies would be discontinued as staff involvement in promotion and reassignment exercises, regarded as necessary to ensure the integrity of the selection process, would be achieved through their participation in the boards.

108. **The Advisory Committee sees merit in the introduction of job network boards to manage selections and reassignments and accepts that a centrally managed process may be needed to ensure that qualified staff can be matched to vacant positions across the entire Secretariat in a more strategic manner in order to meet organizational needs.**

109. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in his report entitled "Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform", the Secretary-General emphasized the importance of enhancing the flexibility and decision-making authority of line managers, as well as their responsibility for financial and human resources (A/51/950, paras. 236 and 237; see also A/53/414, A/55/253 and Corr.1 and A/55/270). In its related resolutions, 53/221 and 55/258, the General Assembly recognized the need to promote responsibility and accountability of staff at all levels.

110. **In view of the potential of the proposed new system for selection and reassignment to change the role of managers, the General Assembly may wish to invite the Secretary-General to reflect further on the role of individual hiring managers in the proposed process with a view to ensuring that they remain directly involved in, and thus responsible for, selecting the staff who will carry out the substantive work programmes of their offices.**

111. **With regard to the participation of representatives of staff in the job network boards, the Advisory Committee acknowledges the need for a participatory process involving staff in order to, inter alia, build confidence in the integrity of the proposed new selection and reassignment system. In the view of the Committee, however, and given that the Secretary-General has not presented any evidence to the contrary, the current central review body system, which includes representatives of staff, is adequate to ensure the transparency and integrity of that process. The Advisory Committee does not believe that the participation of representatives of staff in the job network boards is in the best interests of the Organization and therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to adjust his proposal to include a**

mechanism for the participation of representatives of staff that is similar to the current central review body system.

112. The Secretary-General indicates in his report that the terms of reference, rules of procedure and operating guidelines of the job network boards will be defined during the two-year preparation phase (A/67/324/Add.1, table 1). In its report on the system for the administration of justice, the Advisory Committee observed that the largest number of cases referred to the system dealt with appointment-related decisions (A/67/547, para. 35). **In that context, the Committee considers that it will be important to ensure that the terms of reference, rules of procedure and operating guidelines of the job network boards are clearly defined and legally sound.**

Special constraints panel

113. In paragraphs 37 to 39 of his report, the Secretary-General describes the role and functioning of a special constraints panel that would consider exceptional requests from staff in the reassignment pool to remain in the same duty station. Approval would be granted on the basis of clear criteria, including medical reasons or other compelling personal circumstances where a change of duty station would cause undue hardship. The panel, which would be composed of representatives of staff and management in equal numbers, would also consider requests made jointly by managers and staff members for a staff member to remain in his or her position when engaged in a project whose success would be undermined by mobility.

114. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that several United Nations system entities and other international organizations with mobility policies had established special constraints panels, or their equivalent, which could recommend that staff be exempted from rotation or have their rotation deferred. In response to a request for an example of "compelling personal circumstances", the Committee was informed that the presence in a certain location of recognized dependants, the need for specialized educational facilities and the existence of child custody arrangements had been cited by other organizations as reasons for exemption from or deferral of rotation.

115. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was also informed that, in the event that a staff member subject to reassignment whose request for an exemption was denied by the special constraints panel refused to move, he or she would be regarded as having abandoned his or her post pursuant to rule 9.3 of the Staff Regulations and Rules. Abandonment of post was defined as a separation initiated by the staff member other than by way of resignation and was not regarded as a termination.

116. **With regard to the special constraints panel, the Advisory Committee echoes its recommendation in paragraph 112 above that it will be important to ensure that the terms of reference, rules of procedure and operating guidelines of the panel, and in particular the criteria for the granting of exemptions, are clearly defined and legally sound. The concerns of the Committee about the participation of representatives of staff in the job network boards (see para. 111 above) apply equally to the special constraints panel. The General Assembly may therefore wish to request the Secretary-General to adjust this aspect of his proposal.**

Implementation and transitional measures

117. **The Advisory Committee points out that the implementation of the preparatory activities outlined in the report of the Secretary-General will depend on the outcome of the consideration by the General Assembly of the comprehensive report on the proposed mobility and career development framework referred to in paragraph 136 below.**

118. In section VI of his report, the Secretary-General discusses the implementation of the proposed mobility and career development framework. He indicates that, if approved by the General Assembly, the framework would be in place as of 1 January 2013. However, a two-year preparation phase, during which the precise implementation modalities would be developed, would be required. During that period, the current staff selection system would remain in force for all staff members but, to assist staff who wish to be mobile and to provide relief to staff in hardship duty stations, it would be amended to give priority for selection to internationally recruited staff members applying from other duty stations, in particular those applying from D and E duty stations.

119. A detailed description of the work to be undertaken during the preparation phase is set out in paragraphs 49 and 50 of the report, and table 1 presents a broad implementation timeline. The Secretary-General indicates, inter alia, that the importance of supporting staff and their families when they are moving has been highlighted by staff and other organizations as key to the successful implementation of a mobility policy. Relevant issues to be addressed during the preparation phase include the extent to which host country agreements allow for spouse employment and ways and means to improve the information and guidance provided during the relocation and integration process (A/67/324/Add.1, para. 51).

120. The Secretary-General also indicates that to support mobility the Office of Human Resources Management would need to lead work to review existing human resources capacities across the Organization, including by looking into roles and responsibilities and reprofiling and retraining human resources staff as necessary (A/67/324/Add.1, para. 50). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Office did not by itself have the capacity to undertake the work required during the transition period. It would therefore draw on existing global human resources capacities, including in executive offices, offices away from Headquarters, regional commissions and field missions. The Committee was further informed, upon enquiry, that full implementation of the proposed mobility framework would be aligned with the roll-out of the enterprise resource planning system (Umoja). In that context, it was expected that some current human resources tasks would be carried out electronically. This would allow posts to be reprofiled to provide support for the mobility framework.

121. The Secretary-General indicates in paragraph 56 of his report that, since the introduction of the proposed framework would represent a significant change for the Organization and its staff, a number of transitional measures for currently serving staff have been agreed to by the Staff-Management Committee to ensure that those staff at the P-4 and P-5 levels who have fulfilled the requirements of the current staff selection system will continue to be eligible for promotion to the next level until 31 December 2018.

122. **The Advisory Committee notes the potential capacity constraints within the Office of Human Resources Management, which is also actively engaged in other aspects of the human resources reform agenda (see section II above), and also recalls that the human resources module of the enterprise resource planning system will not be rolled out until the end of 2015, that is, after the preparation phase is over (see para. 39 above). The Committee therefore considers that it will be essential to draw on existing global human resources capacities to ensure that, should the General Assembly approve the proposal of the Secretary-General, it will be implemented without the need for additional capacity.**

Costs

123. The Secretary-General provides some information on the current cost of mobility in the Organization in paragraphs 60 and 61 of his report. He indicates that for the biennium 2010-2011 mobility-related expenditures, which are recorded in the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) under common staff costs, amounted to approximately $36.1 million, comprising $22.4 million under the regular budget, excluding estimated expenditures for special political missions, and $13.7 million under extrabudgetary resources. For peacekeeping operations and special political missions, however, mobility expenditures are not easily identified as they are recorded in multiple financial systems that are not integrated. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the local systems of each field operation did not distinguish between expenditures associated with the appointment of new staff and those connected to the mobility of existing staff. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that for the financial periods 2009/10 and 2010/11, total expenditures relating to the transfer and appointment of existing and new staff, including the payment of the hardship and mobility allowance, amounted to $243.6 million for peacekeeping operations and $22.1 million for special political missions.

124. The Secretary-General suggests in his report that the main costs of mobility under the proposed framework would be generated by geographic moves. One-time costs of such moves include the relocation grant, assignment grant and travel costs, while recurrent costs include the mobility allowance. The actual figures vary depending on the profile of the staff member, the category and designation of the duty station and the duration of the assignment (A/67/324/Add.1, paras. 57 and 58). The Secretary-General states that, to the extent that the proposed new framework will lead to a higher number of geographic moves, it will result in an increase in the related common staff costs. He goes on to explain, however, that there will not necessarily be a sudden surge in geographic moves because (a) 40 per cent of currently serving staff at the P-4 level already have a geographic move recorded in IMIS and (b) the proposed transitional measures mean that staff with two lateral moves would be able to count those in lieu of a geographic move until 31 December 2018 (ibid., paras. 64 and 65).

125. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with an indicative costing scenario for the proposed mobility framework. The scenario was based on the following assumptions:

(a) An estimated number of 11,191 staff members in the Professional and higher and Field Service categories would be subject to the framework. This number

is derived from the total population of staff members in the Professional and higher and Field Service categories holding continuing, permanent and fixed-term appointments as at 30 June 2011, excluding those who are within five years of retirement or whose job network/hardship classification is not recorded in IMIS (11,575), minus the estimated number of non-rotational positions (384, see para. 83 above);

(b) An estimated number of 1,539 staff members would change duty station each year, representing an increase of 20 per cent, or 249 moves, over the current average of 1,290;

(c) As indicated by the International Civil Service Commission in its report, the one-time cost of geographical mobility per staff member for the duration of his or her assignment is around $60,000 (A/67/30 and Corr.1, para. 166);

(d) The total average recurring cost of geographical mobility per staff member per year for the duration of his or her assignment amounts to $28,000;

(e) The costs referred to in (c) and (d) above are based on P-4, step VI, for staff in the Professional and higher categories and FS-4, step VI, for staff in the Field Service category.

126. The Advisory Committee was informed that on the basis of the foregoing assumptions the proposed mobility framework would lead to indicative additional costs of $21.9 million per year. Of that amount, 12 per cent would be funded under the regular budget, including provision for special political missions, and the remaining 88 per cent under the budgets of peacekeeping operations and from extrabudgetary resources. The Committee was further informed that those additional costs would be incurred only once the framework was fully implemented.

127. In paragraph 66 of the report of the Secretary-General, it is stated that the phased implementation of the proposed framework by job network will enable the Organization to monitor and manage any increase in expenditures. In addition, Umoja will be configured to better capture the costs associated with mobility to allow for more precise reporting of any related changes in expenditure.

128. During its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee enquired as to the indirect costs of the proposed framework. The Committee was informed, in response, that those costs would relate to the introduction of more effective training and career development programmes, the creation of the new role of network staffing officer, the provision of additional support for staff and families who are moving duty station and the design, testing and implementation of changes to Inspira. According to the Secretary-General, the magnitude of those costs was not currently known, but it was expected that they would be met from within existing resources through reprioritization.

129. **The Advisory Committee recalls that, in its report on the reports of the Board of Auditors for the period ended 31 December 2011, it recommended that the Secretary-General submit full cost estimates to the General Assembly, irrespective of the source of funding, for future large-scale projects at the time of their approval (A/67/381, para. 26). The Committee notes the indicative costing information provided to it, upon enquiry, by the Secretary-General and stresses that the direct costs of the proposed framework referred to in paragraph 126 above are not a prediction or an estimate but are based on a**

particular scenario that could change. In view of its comments in paragraph 78 above, the Advisory Committee has doubts about the reliability of the information used to calculate the number of staff expected to change duty station each year (see para. 125 (b) above).

130. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the report of the Secretary-General should have offered a much fuller analysis of the total costs, direct and indirect, of the proposed mobility and career development framework, taking into account current mobility patterns and workforce planning. Such an analysis would have enabled the Committee to undertake a more reliable assessment of the extent to which those costs could be met from within approved resources. The Advisory Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to include a detailed accounting of the full costs of the proposed framework in his next report on the matter. The Advisory Committee emphasizes the importance of a robust monitoring mechanism to track the actual costs of the framework.**

Performance indicators

131. In section VIII of his report, the Secretary-General proposes the following three indicators with which to measure the performance of the proposed framework and assess the extent to which the strategic objectives have been achieved:

(a) **Indicator 1**: Increased predictability and stability in staffing, to be measured by comparing vacancy rates across the Secretariat in order to assess whether they have become constant. Success will be defined as more even vacancy rates across offices/missions and duty stations;

(b) **Indicator 2**: More equitable sharing of the burden of service in difficult duty stations, to be measured by monitoring the number of staff who have served for long periods in D or E hardship locations. Success will be defined as a reduction in the number of staff spending more than five years in those locations;

(c) **Indicator 3**: An increase in the number of senior managers with geographic mobility, to be measured by the number of geographic moves of one year or more recorded in IMIS. Success will be defined as an increase in the number of senior managers who have moved duty station.

132. **The Advisory Committee concurs with the Secretary-General that performance indicators would be required to measure the impact of the proposed mobility and career development framework. The Committee takes the view, however, that the indicators proposed by the Secretary-General need further refinement in order to ensure that they allow for proper performance assessment.**

133. **With regard to indicator 1, the Committee points out that vacancy rates vary from location to location for a variety of reasons, including factors outside the control of the Organization such as the inability to secure visas for staff. Furthermore, vacancy rates in start-up operations are routinely higher than those in established missions. The Committee therefore recommends that indicator 1 be refined to include target vacancy rates for each of the offices and field operations listed against which progress can be measured. As for indicator 2, the Advisory Committee recalls that, as explained in paragraph 85 above, 80 per cent of Field Service positions are in D and E hardship locations.**

Consequently, the indicator as currently formulated will not capture the movement of staff encumbering those positions. The Committee therefore recommends that indicator 2 be further refined to reflect the length of time spent by staff in specific duty stations so that the number of moves between locations of the same hardship classification can also be measured. Lastly, with regard to indicator 3, the Advisory Committee recommends that data recorded in all human resources information systems, not only IMIS, be used to measure the geographic mobility of senior managers.

134. **The Advisory Committee also considers that additional performance indicators may be useful to measure, inter alia, the impact of the framework on the skill profiles of staff members, on turnover rates (see also para. 92 above) and on the effectiveness of mandate implementation. The General Assembly may wish to request the Secretary-General to develop such additional indicators and to present them in the context of his next report on this question.**

Conclusion

135. In paragraph 75 of his report, the Secretary-General requests the General Assembly to approve the proposed mobility and career development framework as set out in his report. **As indicated in paragraph 69 above, the Advisory Committee believes that a better managed organizational mobility programme has the potential to contribute to improving the delivery of mandates and also to respond better to the career aspirations of staff. However, bearing in mind its comments, observations and recommendations in the preceding paragraphs, the Advisory Committee is not in a position to recommend approval of the proposed mobility and career development framework, in its current form, by the General Assembly.**

136. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to proceed with further developing and refining the aspects of the framework highlighted in paragraphs 71, 78, 81, 84, 87, 96, 100, 103, 110 to 112, 116, 130, 133 and 134 above. Bearing in mind the intention of the Secretary-General to begin implementation of the proposed framework on 1 January 2015, the Committee further recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to submit to it, for its consideration, as soon as possible and no later than at the main part of the sixty-eighth session, a comprehensive report on the proposed mobility and career development framework that addresses the issues raised by the Committee, including the need for more information and analysis to justify the move beyond a purely voluntary system towards a managed system of mobility. As indicated in paragraph 88 above, it is the view of the Advisory Committee that measures to ameliorate the situation of staff who have served in hardship duty stations for long periods of time without being able to move is not contingent on the approval by the General Assembly of the present proposal of the Secretary-General.**

IV. Composition of the Secretariat

137. The report of the Secretary-General entitled "Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics" (A/67/329), which covers the period from 1 July 2011 to

30 June 2012, was submitted pursuant to various General Assembly resolutions concerning human resources management, the most recent of which are resolutions 63/250, 65/247 and 66/234. The report presents a demographic analysis of the global staff of the Secretariat, as well as of staff subject to the system of desirable ranges. The addendum to the report (A/67/329/Add.1) presents a demographic analysis of the engagement of gratis personnel, retired staff, consultants and individual contractors for the biennium 2010-2011.

138. The Advisory Committee notes that, in response to its recommendation that the raw data presented in the report on the composition of the Secretariat be accompanied by an analysis of demographic trends (see A/65/537, para. 89, and A/66/511 and Corr.1, para. 4), a new table entitled "Overview of staff demographic trends in the Secretariat, from 2008 to 2012 (as at 30 June)" has been included in the report of the Secretary-General (A/67/329, table 2). The final column of the table provides brief comments on trends in major demographic variables over the past five years. **While the Advisory Committee welcomes the inclusion of commentary on demographic trends affecting the Secretariat, it believes that the Secretary-General could go further in his analysis by, for example, identifying the reasons for particular patterns, especially those emerging since the issuance of the previous composition report.** For instance, the Committee was informed during its consideration of the current report that, although the total population of the Secretariat had increased by 8.5 per cent over the past five years, there had actually been a decrease of 860 staff (or 2 per cent) between 2011 and 2012 owing primarily to changes in the field staff population occasioned by the downsizing of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) and the start-up of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). **In the view of the Committee, this type of information would be a useful addition to the report on the composition of the Secretariat and should be included in future submissions.**

139. In figure XI and paragraph 22 of the report, the Secretary-General comments on the average age of Secretariat staff over the past five years, stating that it has remained stable at around 42 years. The Advisory Committee notes, however, that the raw data included in the report points to a gradual increase in the average age of staff, which stood at 41 years in 2008, climbed to 42.2 years in 2009, levelled off at 42.3 years in 2010 and 2011 and then climbed again to 42.8 years in 2012. **Given that the rejuvenation of the Secretariat has been a priority of the General Assembly, the Advisory Committee takes the view that the Secretary-General should keep the age profile of the Organization under review by closely monitoring demographic trends.**

140. The report on the composition of the Secretariat also contains information about senior officials of the United Nations. Table 7 of the report indicates that, as at 30 June 2012, there were a total of 64 Under-Secretaries-General and 79 Assistant Secretaries-General serving in the Secretariat. Upon enquiry as to the reporting lines of those officials, the Advisory Committee was informed that all the Under-Secretaries-General listed in the report were accountable to the Secretary-General for the performance of their functions and that each of them could bring matters to his attention. All those with programmatic responsibilities also signed annual compacts with the Secretary-General to ensure accountability, transparency and appropriate oversight. On an ongoing basis, however, direction and guidance were also provided on behalf of the Secretary-General by the Deputy Secretary-General

and the Chef de Cabinet. Heads of peacekeeping operations and special political missions also received guidance from the Under-Secretaries-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Political Affairs, as appropriate. The Committee was also informed that most of the 79 Assistant Secretaries-General reported to an Under-Secretary-General. However, the 11 heads of peacekeeping operations at the Assistant Secretary-General level, as well as the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Peacebuilding Support Office, also signed annual compacts with the Secretary-General.

141. On a related matter, the Advisory Committee enquired, during its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat, as to the number of senior officials (D-1 and above) employed under various types of non-standard appointment. In response, the Committee was informed that, as at 30 June 2012, 13 individuals (12 at the Under-Secretary-General level and 1 at the Assistant Secretary-General level) were employed on $1-a-year contracts, 9 individuals (5 at the Under-Secretary-General level, 1 at the Assistant Secretary-General level and 3 at the D-2 level) were employed on when-actually-employed contracts and 39 individuals (8 at the Under-Secretary-General level, 4 at the Assistant Secretary-General level, 6 at the D-2 level and 21 at the D-1 level) had temporary appointments and were occupying either positions funded under general temporary assistance or vacant posts/positions. In addition, during the biennium 2010-2011, a total of 267 consultancy/individual contractor contracts had been awarded to former staff members whose last recorded grade was at the level of Under-Secretary-General, Assistant Secretary-General, D-2 or D-1. The Committee was further informed, upon enquiry, that the recruitment of individuals on the above-mentioned types of appointment did not entail the establishment of posts, and that extrabudgetary funds had been used to meet the costs associated with 6 of the $1-a-year contracts, 5 of the when-actually-employed contracts, 27 of the temporary appointments and 186 of the consultants/individual contractors.

142. The Advisory Committee recalls that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 35/217, the establishment of all extrabudgetary posts at the D-1 level and above for which the approval of an intergovernmental organ is not required is subject to the concurrence of the Advisory Committee. The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that that policy was clear and was reflected in the relevant administrative instructions and delegations of authority. With specific reference to general temporary assistance positions funded from extrabudgetary resources, the Committee was further informed, upon enquiry, that in an effort to respond to its previously expressed concerns regarding the scope of implementation of resolution 35/217, its concurrence would henceforth also be sought for the establishment of full-time positions at the D-1 level and above funded under extrabudgetary general temporary assistance that were expected to exceed one year's duration. In addition, the Secretary-General intended to inform the Committee, on an annual basis post facto, of extrabudgetary positions at the D-1 level and above funded under extrabudgetary general temporary assistance, including those positions occupied by individuals on when-actually-employed contracts, that had been established for shorter periods and had been approved by the Controller. The Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts was in the process of finalizing an internal memorandum formalizing those arrangements, which would then be transmitted to all heads of departments and offices. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the approach of the Secretary-General as a positive step towards enhancing**

transparency regarding the establishment of senior-level posts and positions funded from extrabudgetary resources.

143. Section IV of the report of the Secretary-General contains information on staff subject to the system of desirable ranges. As indicated in table 2 of the report, as at 30 June 2012 there were 2,245 Secretariat staff with geographical status, an increase of 196 over the figure of 2,049 for the year ending 30 June 2011. Of the 247 Secretariat staff newly appointed to geographical posts during the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012, 79 were appointed through national competitive recruitment examinations (now replaced by the young professionals programme) (A/67/329, para. 36).

144. The Secretary-General indicates in his report that as at 30 June 2012 the number of posts subject to geographical distribution was 3,460. The Secretary-General explains that the difference between the number of geographical posts and the number of staff with geographical status is attributable to the fact that there are 336 vacant posts, 276 posts temporarily encumbered by non-geographical and other staff, 104 staff with limited appointments and 499 staff who are not geographically defined and are under review (A/67/329, footnote 9). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that staff were regarded as "not geographically defined" when the data in IMIS did not indicate clearly whether those staff had geographical status. The Office of Human Resources Management was working with executive offices and offices away from Headquarters to review and, where necessary, correct the relevant IMIS entries to ensure that staff serving against geographical posts were reflected as such in the system.

145. In its previous report on human resources management, the Advisory Committee expressed concern that approximately 40 per cent of the posts subject to the system of desirable ranges were not encumbered by staff having geographical status (A/66/511 and Corr.1, para. 7). **While noting that some progress has been made in this regard (as at 30 June 2012 there had been a 5 per cent increase in the number of posts subject to the system of desirable ranges encumbered by staff having geographical status) the Advisory Committee remains concerned about the large proportion of geographical posts that are not encumbered by staff having geographical status. The Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to take concrete measures to address this issue, and repeats its call to the Secretary-General that he ensure that the recruitment of candidates is carried out in accordance with the established recruitment procedures, including through the use of the national competitive examination roster (now superseded by the young professionals programme).**

146. **The Advisory Committee is also concerned about the lack of clarity regarding the recording of geographical status of staff members in IMIS. The Committee expects that the Office of Human Resources Management will conclude its review of the IMIS data as quickly as possible so as to ensure that the geographical status of the 499 staff referred to in paragraph 144 above is correctly recorded.**

147. In its previous report on human resources management, the Advisory Committee also commented on the first release of the online reporting tool, "HR Insight" (A/66/511 and Corr.1, para. 9). The Committee recalls that the tool, which is based on the human resources data warehouse and retrieves information from

other human resources systems, including IMIS and Nucleus, is designed to provide Member States with access to monthly reports showing data similar to that contained in the report on the composition of the Secretariat. In his overview report, the Secretary-General points out that HR Insight is helping to make the United Nations more environmentally friendly by reducing the number of printed pages (A/67/324, para. 28).

148. In response to a query about the confidentiality issues raised in its previous report on human resources management (A/66/511 and Corr.1, para. 9), the Advisory Committee was informed that access to HR Insight was granted to users from permanent missions who were listed as staff members of the mission in the latest available list issued by the Protocol and Liaison Service. Exceptional access could be granted only by the Director of the Strategic Planning and Staffing Division of the Office of Human Resources Management. Passwords to access the database were changed every six months and could not be amended by users. Each permanent mission could view information about its own nationals concerning contract type, projected retirement date, if applicable, e-mail address, registered examination status, birth year and date of entry-on-duty. Permanent missions could access information about all staff members only to the extent that such information was available on the staff list (nationality, department, name, gender, level and duty station).

149. The addendum to the report of the Secretary-General (A/67/329/Add.1) contains data about the employment of retirees. The statistics indicate that, in comparison with the biennium 2008-2009, the number of retired staff hired, the number of engagements and the corresponding number of days worked have all declined in the period 2010-2011. **The Advisory Committee welcomes this trend, which is in line with the requests of the General Assembly.**

V. Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and possible criminal behaviour

150. The report on the practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and possible criminal behaviour (A/67/171 and Corr.1) was submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 59/287, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to inform Member States on an annual basis about all actions taken in cases of established misconduct and/or criminal behaviour and the disciplinary action and, where appropriate, legal action taken in accordance with the established procedures and regulations. The report, which is the eighth such report of the Secretary-General and covers the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012, provides a broad overview of the administrative machinery in disciplinary matters, a summary of cases in which one or more disciplinary measures were imposed by the Secretary-General during the reporting period, comparative data reflecting the number of cases referred for action during the reporting period and the disposition of cases completed and information on the practice of the Secretary-General in cases of possible criminal behaviour.

151. During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee was informed that, in order to address the comments and observations it had made in response to the previous report of the Secretary-General on his practice in disciplinary matters (see A/66/511 and Corr.1, para. 12), the report currently before the Committee

contained more information in each of the case summaries in order to better explain the considerations taken into account by the Secretary-General when deciding on the measure or measures to impose in a particular case. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the inclusion of additional information in the case summaries contributes to an enhanced understanding of the practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and, as such, welcomes this more detailed presentation.**

152. In section IV of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that 95 cases (35 concerning staff based at Headquarters and offices away from Headquarters and 60 concerning field staff) were referred to the Office of Human Resources Management for action during the reporting period and that, during the same period, 155 cases, corresponding to cases referred to the Office both prior to and during the reporting period, were completed. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that a backlog of around 74 cases was currently pending, as compared with a backlog of 129 cases in September 2011. The backlog was attributable to the time taken to process cases.

153. In paragraphs 57 to 59 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the time taken to complete the disciplinary process varies depending on the complexity of the matter, and that a number of factors, including the continued emergence from the United Nations Dispute Tribunal and the United Nations Appeals Tribunal of jurisprudence on the disciplinary and pre-disciplinary process, have added to the complexity, and hence the length, of the disciplinary process. He states that the changing judicial landscape, and in particular the higher standard of proof required by the Appeals Tribunal, have resulted in the need for increasingly detailed analysis and scrutiny of every aspect of each case referred for disciplinary action. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the average length of time to complete a case currently stood at 44 months. It is stated in paragraph 59 of the report of the Secretary-General that in some disciplinary cases, the length of time taken to conduct an initial investigation and/or to obtain clarifications and additional evidence, at the disciplinary stage, and the resultant delay in the process, had led to closure of the case.

154. **While recognizing the need to ensure that all disciplinary cases are processed in accordance with established procedures and in conformity with relevant jurisprudence, the Advisory Committee is concerned at the time taken to complete cases, which, in some instances, leads to their closure with no measure imposed. The Committee also continues to be concerned about the ongoing backlog of disciplinary cases and recalls, in this connection, that the General Assembly approved the continuation of general temporary assistance resources under the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period 2012-2013 so that the Office of Human Resources Management could address the backlog of disciplinary cases emanating from field missions (see A/66/779, para. 127). The Advisory Committee expects that the Secretary-General will continue to make efforts to complete disciplinary cases in a timely manner and that the remaining backlog of cases will be eliminated as soon as possible.**

155. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in its previous report on human resources management, it noted that divergent disciplinary measures had been imposed in respect of apparently similar instances of misconduct (see A/66/511 and Corr.1, para. 12). During its consideration of the current report of the Secretary-

General on his practice in disciplinary matters, the Committee was informed that disciplinary cases tended to be very fact-specific, with each carrying unique mitigating and aggravating circumstances. As such, while equality and consistency of treatment were essential elements informing the consideration of such cases, it was difficult to extract general principles concerning the proportionality of disciplinary measures imposed.

VI. Amendments to the Staff Rules

156. The report of the Secretary-General on amendments to the Staff Rules (A/67/99 and Corr.1) contains the full text of new rules and amendments to existing rules that the Secretary-General is proposing to implement as of 1 January 2013. In the summary of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that most of the proposed amendments are of a technical nature. Some of the amendments, for example to rule 1.2 (p) on conflict of interest, rule 3.13 on the mobility allowance and rule 3.15 on the additional hardship allowance for service in non-family duty stations, are required to reflect decisions of the General Assembly and approved recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission, while others, such as to rule 5.2 on home leave, rule 5.3 (e) on special leave and rule 9.8 on termination indemnity, are intended to clarify existing provisions.

157. **The Advisory Committee is dissatisfied with the format of the report of the Secretary-General, taking the view that it could be more reader-friendly. The Committee recommends that, in future, proposed amendments to rules and regulations, including the Staff Rules, be presented in such a way as to allow readers to compare them to the existing text, with both deletions and additions highlighted for ease of reference.**

158. In paragraph 5 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that subparagraphs (a) and (b) of rule 3.13, Mobility allowance, have been amended to reflect the decision of the International Civil Service Commission in its annual report of 2011, as reflected in General Assembly resolution 66/235, to the effect that, in the exceptional case of staff members who remained at the same duty station at the explicit request of the Organization or for compelling humanitarian reasons, the mobility allowance is payable for one additional year, as well as to prescribe precisely when the allowance is payable. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, in accordance with the decision taken by the Commission in 1989, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/198 (sect. E) and with effect from 1 July 1990, internationally recruited staff on an assignment of one year or more who have had five consecutive years of service in the United Nations system may qualify for the mobility allowance. For the purpose of the payment of the allowance, an "assignment" is defined as the transfer of a staff member to a new duty station, at which the staff member is installed, for a period of one year or more (see A/44/30 (Vol. II), para. 318).

159. The Secretary-General states in paragraph 12 of his report that subparagraph (b) of rule 4.12, Temporary appointment, has been amended to reflect the provisions of General Assembly resolution 63/250. The Advisory Committee notes that the amendment consists of replacing the word "extended" with the word "renewed" and inserting the word "additional" before the word "year" in the second and third lines of the text. The Advisory Committee enquired as to why the amendment had not

been made earlier, given that General Assembly resolution 63/250 had been adopted in December 2008, but did not receive a satisfactory response. **The Advisory Committee emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the rules and regulations of the Organization accurately reflect the language used in relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.**

VII. Activities of the Ethics Office

160. The seventh annual report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Ethics Office (A/67/306), submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/254, provides an overview and assessment of the work programme of the Office during the period from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2012. It also, in response to the request of the Assembly set out in its resolution 63/250, includes information on the activities of the United Nations Ethics Committee.

161. The Advisory Committee recalls that total regular budget resources approved for the Ethics Office for the biennium 2012-2013 amounted to $3,903,400 before recosting (see A/66/7, para. I.41, and General Assembly resolution 66/248). In addition, resources in the amount of $1,170,200 have been allocated to the Office from the budget of the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013 to cover requirements for staff in the field (see General Assembly resolution 66/265).

162. During the reporting period, the Ethics Office received 887 requests for its services, representing an increase over the 766 requests received during the preceding period. The percentage of requests from non-headquarters locations also increased, from 57 per cent to 63 per cent of the total requests received. The Secretary-General views those increases as evidence of the continuing importance of the Office as a secure and confidential consultative resource for staff on matters related to ethics, values and organizational culture, and as an indicator of the effectiveness of the ongoing efforts of the Office to engage with staff members outside New York (A/67/306, paras. 8 and 11).

163. Figure IV of the report of the Secretary-General shows that the 475 specific requests for ethics advice and guidance received by the Ethics Office during the reporting period fell into the following eight categories: employment-related concerns; gifts and hospitality; outside activities; personal investments and assets; allegations of wrongdoing; post-employment restrictions; procurement ethics; and other conflict of interest. The Secretary-General indicates in paragraph 18 that the "procurement ethics" category was newly established during the reporting period in order to reflect the increasing ethics advisory assistance requested by the Procurement Division. Within that framework, the Office provides independent advice to the Division on (a) the suitability of external ethics and compliance experts who are proposed by vendors to verify that the vendor has implemented ethics, anti-corruption and compliance programmes that satisfy United Nations expectations; and (b) whether the documentation provided by a vendor concerning its corporate ethics and compliance programme provides sufficient reassurance to the United Nations about third-party risks. **The Advisory Committee is supportive of the positive role played by the Ethics Office in the area of procurement ethics, particularly in cases where the advice provided by the Office has**

provided vendors who had previously been prevented from doing business with the Organization with the opportunity to re-register.

164. In the report on human resources management it submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, the Advisory Committee pointed to the need to ensure that the functions of the various mechanisms for reporting misconduct and resolving grievances within the Organization did not overlap and that staff understood the respective roles of each of those mechanisms (A/65/537, para. 97). In paragraph 14 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that, in September 2011, with a view to helping staff members to understand the roles and mandates of the many entities within the Organization that address their concerns, the Ethics Office distributed a guide entitled "The road map: a staff member's guide to finding the right place" to all field missions, executive offices, regional commissions and regional offices. The Secretary-General further indicates that the guide, which is also available on the website of the Office (www.un.org/en/ethics/), has been well received by staff and management. An updated second edition is due to be published in 2012-2013. **The Advisory Committee welcomes this development.**

165. Information on the implementation of the financial disclosure programme administered by the Ethics Office is contained in section III, part B, of the report. The Advisory Committee notes, in particular, that during the 2011 filing cycle a record total of 99.9 per cent of participants (or 4,303 staff members of the total number of 4,306 participating) complied with their filing obligations. The Secretary-General attributes that achievement to the efforts undertaken by the Ethics Office to support compliance with programme obligations through, inter alia, briefings for filers, technical support and targeted follow-up in cases of non-compliance. **The Advisory Committee commends the Ethics Office for its efforts to ensure full compliance with the requirements of the financial disclosure programme.**

166. In paragraph 30 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that, during the 2011 filing cycle, 129 senior officials at the level of Assistant Secretary-General and above participated in the voluntary public disclosure initiative, an increase of 12.5 per cent over the 111 officials who participated during the previous cycle. Of those 129 participants, 87 opted to publicly disclose, on the website of the Secretary-General, a summary of their assets, liabilities and outside interests, demonstrating their commitment to transparency and their recognition of the need to assure the general public and Member States that in the discharge of their official duties they were not influenced by personal considerations. The remaining 42 officials publicly affirmed that they had duly completed their confidential financial disclosure statements as required by the Organization. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that some senior officials chose not to publicly disclose a summary of their assets, liabilities and outside interests for family or security reasons. The Committee was further informed that the Ethics Office would continue to reach out to senior officials in order to increase participation rates in the voluntary public disclosure initiative. **The Advisory Committee commends the Ethics Office for its efforts to increase participation in the voluntary public disclosure initiative. The Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will continue to encourage senior officials who have not yet publicly disclosed a summary of their assets to do so in future cycles.**

167. Paragraphs 34 and 35 of the report of the Secretary-General refer to the measures taken in respons to the recommendations of the Advisory Committee,

endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/234, concerning the cost of review services for the financial disclosure programme and the regulatory framework of the programme. With regard to the latter issue, the Advisory Committee notes that the Ethics Office is in the process of consulting with other concerned offices to identify areas where further guidelines, clarification and/or revision to the current policy governing the financial disclosure programme should be considered in order to more clearly define eligibility criteria and to better determine the filing population based on the risk profile of the Organization. During its consideration of the report, the Committee was informed that, in the context of those consultations, particular attention was being paid to the risks associated with functions carried out by relatively low-level Professional staff, particularly in peacekeeping operations, with a view to determining whether it would be advisable to include them in the programme. **The Advisory Committee points out that any expansion of the filing population may have financial implications. The Secretary-General should therefore report on the outcome of the above-mentioned consultations in his next report on the activities of the Ethics Office.**

168. With regard to the protection of staff against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations, it is indicated that during the reporting period the Ethics Office received 46 enquiries related to the policy set out in Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2005/21 (the so-called "whistleblower protection policy"). The Advisory Committee notes, however, that of the 106 preliminary reviews of complaints of retaliation initiated by the Office since its establishment in 2006, only one has led to a determination that retaliation had been established (A/67/306, paras. 43 and 47). In this connection, the Secretary-General indicates in his report that the overwhelming majority of reports of misconduct cited in retaliation complaints submitted to the Ethics Office have involved allegations of inappropriate conduct directed at the complainant from within his or her management chain. He therefore concludes that the current policy is being overwhelmingly utilized as a staff grievance mechanism pertaining to work performance matters rather than fulfilling its original purpose of facilitating reports of fraud, corruption, waste of resources and other serious misconduct that may have severe consequences for the Organization if left unidentified and unaddressed (ibid., paras. 48 and 49). In order to remedy the shortcomings of the current policy, a comprehensive review is being considered, the modalities of which are currently under discussion.

169. On the issue of outreach, training and education, the Secretary-General reports that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/234, and recognizing that the behaviour of senior United Nations managers has a direct and lasting impact on the Organization's culture of ethics, integrity and accountability, the Ethics Office has conducted a number of confidential ethics briefings with Assistant Secretaries-General and Under-Secretaries-General and was responsible for delivering the ethical leadership component of the Senior Leadership Induction Programme for senior civilian, military and police leaders in peacekeeping missions (ibid., paras. 62-64). In addition, in order to respond to a request of the Secretary-General that it create an enhanced ethical organizational culture by initiating the leadership dialogues project, the Office has been working on a discussion guide on what it means to be an international civil servant and the importance of the oath of office. Starting with a guided discussion led by the Secretary-General and his senior leadership team, each successive layer of management will lead their immediate

staff in a conversation on the oath of office. It is expected that the dialogue process will begin in late 2012 and be concluded by 30 June 2013.

170. In its resolution 66/234, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General devise appropriate ethics evaluation criteria. Accordingly, as indicated in paragraph 72 of the report, from January to June 2012 the Ethics Office conducted the Organization's first ethics and reputational risk assessment of field operations with a view to identifying significant ethical and reputational risks that threaten the ability of the United Nations to fulfil its peace and security mandates. The Secretary-General states that the results of the assessment, which sought to establish a credible statistical baseline for monitoring the perceptions and attitudes of staff at all grade levels in field operations concerning the ethical culture at the United Nations and organizational and personal integrity, will allow the Organization to take appropriate, prudent actions to address and mitigate the risks identified. **The Advisory Committee looks forward to reviewing the ethics evaluation criteria in due course.**

171. Section IV of the report of the Secretary-General describes the activities of the United Nations Ethics Committee, which was established pursuant to Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2007/11 and is primarily responsible for establishing a unified set of ethical standards and policies for the United Nations Secretariat and the separately administrated funds and programmes and consulting on certain important and particularly complex cases and issues having system-wide implications. The Advisory Committee notes, in particular, that pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/234, the process for renaming the United Nations Ethics Committee has been initiated by concerned offices within the Secretariat.

Annex

Average length of service of Secretariat staff

Abbreviations and acronyms

ASG	Assistant Secretary-General
D+	Director level and above
FS	Field Service
GS+	General Service and related categories
LT	Language teachers
NO	National Officers
NO-A	National Officer with a minimum of 1 to 2 years of work experience
NO-B	National Officer with a minimum of 2 to 3 years of work experience
NO-C	National Officer with a minimum of 5 years of work experience
NO-D	National Officer with a minimum of 7 years of work experience
INT	Interpreters
P	Professional category
PIA	Public information assistants
R	Revisers
S	Security
T	Translators
TC	Trades and crafts category
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
USG	Under-Secretary-General

I. All staff of the Secretariat as at 30 June 2012

(Population: 42,887)

Appointment type and category	*Average age*	*Average length of service in the Secretariat*	*Average length of service in the United Nations common system*	*Number of staff*	*Number of staff as a percentage of the total population*
Field operations	**41.6**	**4.7**	**5.8**	**22 738**	**53.02**
Fixed-term	41.4	4.4	5.5	22 050	51.41
D+	55.1	3.9	7.7	203	0.47
P	46.8	3.2	5.4	2 545	5.93
FS	45.5	4.0	7.1	3 869	9.02
GS+	39.3	4.7	5.1	15 433	35.99
Permanent/continuing	52.1	22.4	22.9	374	0.87
D+	56.4	11.1	16.4	9	0.02
P	45.5	13.0	14.4	62	0.14
FS	53.1	21.6	21.9	183	0.43
GS+	53.6	29.3	29.3	120	0.28
Temporary	40.6	1.2	3.0	314	0.73
D+	56.8	0.1	6.3	13	0.03
P	41.6	0.6	2.1	129	0.30
FS	45.9	0.8	6.5	28	0.07
GS+	37.3	2.0	2.8	144	0.34
Non-field operations	**44.1**	**8.3**	**9.7**	**20 149**	**46.98**
Fixed-term	41.8	4.8	6.3	11 451	26.70
D+	55.6	5.4	8.9	317	0.74
P	43.1	4.3	6.4	4 800	11.19
FS	46.5	10.5	11.2	279	0.65
GS+	39.8	4.9	5.9	6 055	14.12
Permanent/continuing	48.0	16.0	16.8	6 910	16.11
D+	54.1	19.2	20.8	252	0.59
P	46.6	13.4	14.3	2 839	6.62
FS	50.1	17.9	18.1	8	0.02
GS+	48.6	17.8	18.5	3 811	8.89
Temporary	44.1	0.8	4.3	1 788	4.17
D+	60.0	1.5	11.8	26	0.06
P	47.8	0.8	4.8	1 094	2.55
FS	41.4	3.1	5.3	11	0.03
GS+	37.3	0.6	3.2	657	1.53
Total	**42.8**	**6.4**	**7.6**	**42 887**	**100.00**

II. Staff of the Secretariat in field operations[a] as at 30 June 2012

(Population: 22,738)

Appointment type, category and level	*Average age*	*Average length of service in the Secretariat*	*Average length of service in the United Nations common system*	*Number of staff*	*Number of staff as a percentage of the total population*
Fixed-term	**41.4**	**4.4**	**5.5**	**22 050**	**96.97**
USG	62.0	2.3	8.9	15	0.07
ASG	57.7	5.4	9.7	33	0.15
D-2	54.8	3.3	6.6	44	0.19
D-1	53.5	3.9	7.3	111	0.49
P-5	51.5	4.0	7.0	310	1.36
P-4	48.8	3.6	6.4	841	3.70
P-3	45.3	2.9	4.7	1 128	4.96
P-2	41.7	2.6	3.7	266	1.17
FS-7	54.8	5.9	9.7	12	0.05
FS-6	48.7	5.4	9.6	259	1.14
FS-5	47.3	4.5	8.4	1 112	4.89
FS-4	44.2	3.5	6.2	2 282	10.04
FS-3	44.8	4.3	6.9	202	0.89
FS-2	49.0	6.5	11.5	2	0.01
NO-D	49.1	4.3	4.7	9	0.04
NO-C	46.0	4.0	4.8	132	0.58
NO-B	41.5	3.7	4.2	612	2.69
NO-A	38.6	3.7	4.1	382	1.68
G-7	43.8	8.9	8.9	19	0.08
G-6	43.8	6.8	7.6	328	1.44
G-5	40.3	5.3	5.7	2 061	9.06
G-4	38.9	4.8	5.1	4 593	20.20
G-3	39.5	4.7	5.3	4 829	21.24
G-2	37.7	4.4	4.5	2 334	10.26
G-1	39.5	3.7	3.7	133	0.58
S	37.0	3.0	3.0	1	0.00
Permanent/continuing	**52.1**	**22.4**	**22.9**	**374**	**1.64**
ASG	58.0	3.0	15.5	2	0.01

[a] Field operations include peacekeeping missions plus the United Nations Logistics Base and special political missions in thematic cluster III (United Nations offices, peacebuilding support offices, integrated offices and commissions) and UNAMA, UNAMI and UNSMIL. Thematic cluster I (special and personal envoys, special advisers and personal representatives of the Secretary-General) and thematic cluster II (sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels) are included in the Department of Political Affairs except for support for the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction, which is included in the Office for Disarmament Affairs, and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

Appointment type, category and level	*Average age*	*Average length of service in the Secretariat*	*Average length of service in the United Nations common system*	*Number of staff*	*Number of staff as a percentage of the total population*
D-2	50.0	14.0	14.0	1	0.00
D-1	57.0	13.3	17.2	6	0.03
P-5	49.2	15.6	17.4	22	0.10
P-4	46.4	13.6	15.0	21	0.09
P-3	41.8	9.8	11.1	11	0.05
P-2	37.8	8.3	9.3	8	0.04
FS-7	55.5	24.7	24.7	24	0.11
FS-6	53.0	22.4	22.4	60	0.26
FS-5	52.3	20.7	21.1	64	0.28
FS-4	53.0	19.6	20.4	34	0.15
FS-3	59.0	29.0	29.0	1	0.00
G-7	54.4	30.8	30.8	9	0.04
G-6	54.0	28.2	28.2	22	0.10
G-5	52.6	28.8	29.0	42	0.18
G-4	53.7	29.7	29.7	24	0.11
G-3	54.6	30.3	30.3	19	0.08
G-2	54.5	29.3	29.3	4	0.02
Temporary	**40.6**	**1.2**	**3.0**	**314**	**1.38**
USG	62.0	0.0	12.0	1	0.00
ASG	53.0	0.0	0.0	1	0.00
D-2	64.0	0.0	11.7	3	0.01
D-1	54.0	0.1	4.4	8	0.04
P-5	50.3	0.8	5.0	13	0.06
P-4	44.3	0.5	2.6	35	0.15
P-3	40.6	0.5	1.5	62	0.27
P-2	33.9	1.0	1.1	18	0.08
P-1	35.0	1.0	10.0	1	0.00
FS-6	51.0	1.0	9.5	2	0.01
FS-5	48.3	1.3	7.3	12	0.05
FS-4	43.1	0.4	5.4	14	0.06
NO-B	40.5	2.3	2.6	22	0.10
NO-A	32.0	0.3	0.3	4	0.02
G-6	51.8	11.2	19.4	5	0.02
G-5	38.5	3.7	5.7	30	0.13
G-4	34.1	1.8	1.8	28	0.12
G-3	36.6	0.8	0.9	16	0.07
G-2	35.4	0.2	0.2	36	0.16
G-1	41.0	0.0	1.0	3	0.01
Total	**41.6**	**4.7**	**5.8**	**22 738**	**100.00**

III. Staff of the Secretariat in non-field operations as at 30 June 2012

(Population: 20,149)

Appointment type, category and level	*Average age*	*Average length of service in the Secretariat*	*Average length of service in the United Nations common system*	*Number of staff*	*Number of staff as a percentage of the total population*
Fixed-term	**41.8**	**4.8**	**6.3**	**11 451**	**56.83**
USG	63.3	5.2	9.3	41	0.20
ASG	56.9	5.7	9.6	40	0.20
D-2	55.0	4.6	7.8	78	0.39
D-1	53.5	5.8	9.1	158	0.78
P-5	50.3	5.8	8.7	654	3.25
P-4	46.2	5.1	7.4	1 575	7.82
P-3	41.7	3.8	6.0	1 836	9.11
P-2	33.6	2.4	3.0	722	3.58
P-1	30.2	2.3	2.3	12	0.06
T	35.0	1.0	1.0	1	0.00
FS-6	50.0	13.1	14.2	11	0.05
FS-5	47.8	11.3	12.1	96	0.48
FS-4	46.4	10.3	10.6	117	0.58
FS-3	44.0	8.5	10.0	45	0.22
FS-2	44.1	12.7	12.7	10	0.05
NO-D	44.2	3.1	4.3	9	0.04
NO-C	46.3	4.6	5.1	94	0.47
NO-B	41.3	4.4	4.5	152	0.75
NO-A	39.8	3.4	3.6	209	1.04
G-7	41.5	4.9	6.2	246	1.22
G-6	41.3	5.4	6 8	1 059	5.26
G-5	40.4	5.4	6.7	1 529	7.59
G-4	37.6	4.4	5.3	1 552	7.70
G-3	38.8	4.9	5.6	580	2.88
G-2	42.2	4.0	4.3	302	1.50
G-1	42.2	7.4	8.0	21	0.10
TC	45.3	5.6	6.8	48	0.24
S	35.6	5.2	5.6	218	1.08
PIA	32.9	1.8	2.2	20	0.10
LT	46.7	4.1	4.2	16	0.08
Permanent/continuing	**48.0**	**16.0**	**16.8**	**6 910**	**34.29**
D-2	54.6	19.8	21.6	46	0.23
D-1	54.0	19.1	20.6	206	1.02
P-5	52.1	17.9	19.0	654	3.25

Appointment type, category and level	*Average age*	*Average length of service in the Secretariat*	*Average length of service in the United Nations common system*	*Number of staff*	*Number of staff as a percentage of the total population*
P-4	48.3	14.7	15.4	1 054	5.23
P-3	43.5	10.4	11.4	837	4.15
P-2	37.4	7.7	8.0	293	1.45
INT	35.0	4.0	4.0	1	0.00
FS-5	46.0	12.0	12.5	4	0.02
FS-4	54.3	23.8	23.8	4	0.02
NO-C	51.0	14.7	14.7	10	0.05
NO-B	50.4	14.6	16.4	16	0.08
G-7	50.5	21.8	22.1	541	2.68
G-6	48.5	18.0	18.7	1 431	7.10
G-5	48.4	16.4	17.3	1 014	5.03
G-4	47.3	15.3	16.4	412	2.04
G-3	47.6	15.2	16.5	104	0.52
G-2	50.8	18.4	19.5	37	0.18
G-1	56.3	23.0	23.0	3	0.01
TC	50.9	20.7	20.8	93	0.46
S	45.7	17.5	18.1	128	0.64
PIA	40.0	9.5	9.5	2	0.01
LT	47.0	11.1	11.3	20	0.10
Temporary	**44.1**	**0.8**	**4.3**	**1 788**	**8.87**
USG	62.1	2.4	6.9	7	0.03
ASG	54.7	0.0	7.3	3	0.01
D-2	61.0	4.7	4.7	3	0.01
D-1	59.8	0.7	17.2	13	0.06
P-5	53.8	0.9	8.2	34	0.17
P-4	46.0	0.7	4.5	108	0.54
P-3	39.6	0.7	3.6	250	1.24
P-2	33.3	0.7	2.3	149	0.74
P-1	27.4	0.6	1.5	16	0.08
T	49.8	0.2	5.2	63	0.31
R	65.9	0.3	11.4	71	0.35
INT	55.5	1.1	5.2	403	2.00
FS-6	57.0	0.0	12.0	1	0.00
FS-4	40.8	1.7	3.7	6	0.03
FS-3	40.3	7.3	7.3	3	0.01
FS-2	32.0	2.0	2.0	1	0.00
NO-C	43.0	0.0	1.0	1	0.00
NO-B	40.7	0.7	0.7	7	0.03

Appointment type, category and level	*Average age*	*Average length of service in the Secretariat*	*Average length of service in the United Nations common system*	*Number of staff*	*Number of staff as a percentage of the total population*
NO-A	31.9	0.8	0.8	15	0.07
G-7	42.9	0.8	4.9	8	0.04
G-6	46.5	0.4	9.9	72	0.36
G-5	44.1	0.7	5.4	88	0.44
G-4	35.0	0.6	1.8	249	1.24
G-3	34.6	0.8	2.4	101	0.50
G-2	38.2	0.6	1.6	64	0.32
G-1	26.9	0.7	0.8	36	0.18
S	33.4	0.9	1.4	12	0.06
PIA	35.3	0.5	1.3	4	0.02
Total	**44.1**	**8.3**	**9.7**	**20 149**	**100.00**